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VOL. IX. (NEW SERIES) No. 51. JANUARY, 1900.

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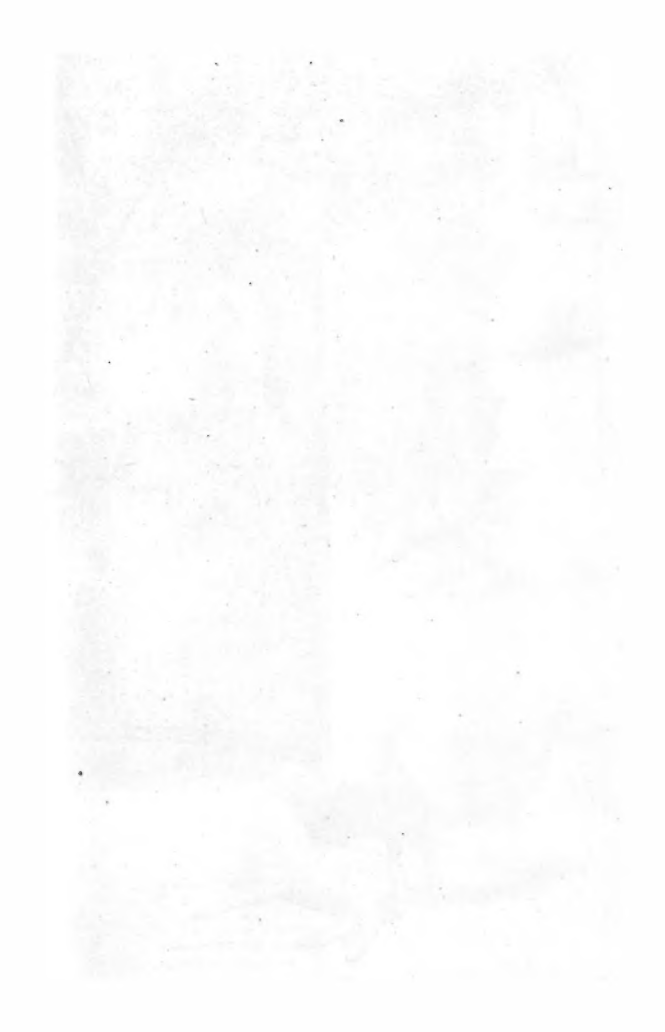
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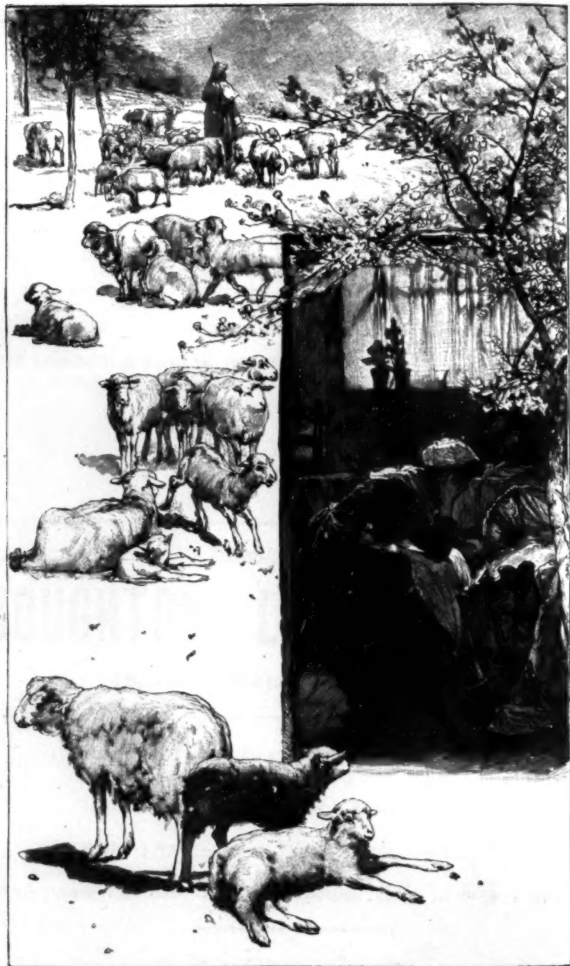
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FRONTISPIECE



MISS VESTA TILLEY

From Photo by ROLAND WHITE, Birmingham

“The London Idol”:

MISS VESTA TILLEY

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



O title was ever more appropriate than that of which Miss Vesta Tilley is the owner, its only defect being that it is not sufficiently comprehensive.

In order to give an adequate notion of her vast popularity it requires some wider term, one that would in fact convey the idea that she is the idol, not of London alone, but of all England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, not to mention the majority of the United States of America. The name, however, with which she was originally dubbed

by her father, and which has since been adopted by an appreciative press and public, is, as far as it goes, a happy one, for few people have been more idolised. In her case, too, the idolatry is not wasted on an image of wood or stone, and certainly not one of brass. It might, from the point of view of the managers, be said with truth that she is an idol of gold, seeing what wealth her talents pour into their coffers; but it is with the public we are concerned, and to them she is not only a magnetic attraction, at whose shrine they love to

worship, but at the same time a faithful servant and a valued friend. If she has secured an enormous amount of her audiences' affections, it is the result of her having always untiringly and unceasingly used her utmost efforts to give them satisfaction, in fact devoting her whole life to their amusement, and though her popularity is so amazingly large it is only in just proportion to her genius. There is no spurious cleverness about her performance, everything she does is the result of keen observation and study; the extraordinary power she has of losing her identity in that of the type she is representing, and the insight she gives us of the varied characters that form the subjects of her repertory being results which can only be attained by an absolute devotion to the art of which she is such a past mistress.

Miss Tilley's father, Mr. Harry Ball, a native of Worcester, was a well-known comic singer, and at different times manager of halls at Gloucester and Nottingham. It cannot be said, however, that she comes of a theatrical stock. The only member of her family, besides her father, who ever trod the boards was a sister who, after having performed for a short period in the music halls, not under the name of Tilley, retired on her marriage. At the present time Miss Vesta Tilley has no relations upon the stage. Born at Worcester, the artist made her first public appearance when she was three years old, at the St. George's Assembly Rooms, Nottingham, under her father's management. Mr. Ball appears to have been of the opinion that you cannot embark upon a career in which you intend to succeed at too early an age, and in the case of his daughter at any rate the theory has proved absolutely correct. Naturally she cannot herself remember much of this important event in her life, and it is impossible to say whether any friendly prophet foretold the greatness that was to be her future lot. At any rate she does not seem to have met with discouragement, as she continued to appear and has been doing so ever since. Though her recollections of "her first appearance upon any stage" are hazy, she very well remembers the occasion on which she made her bow before a

Metropolitan audience. This was at the Royal Music Hall, Holborn, where her success seems to have been gratifying from the outset. What was the first song with which she favoured the London public we cannot say, but it was probably one of the "swell" type, which has always been her great forte. The little dress-coat worn by the infant prodigy, for she was only five years old, is still in existence, and is one of her treasures. That she was excellently got up and looked exactly like a little boy is proved by the following circumstance, which is also interesting as being the reason of her adopting the first name, which has since become so celebrated. Up to this time she had always appeared as "The Great Little Tilley," and it was thus that she was known for the first week or so of her engagement at the Royal. The management of that place found, however, that though this title was well enough to identify her by, it was not sufficiently descriptive to satisfy the curiosity of the British public. It left an uncertainty as to the sex of the little artist, and enquiries were continually being made as to whether she was a boy or a girl. Her father was therefore approached with a view of his making some alteration in her name, and various suggestions were made of others more or less suitable, by which she could be known, that of "Little Lady Tilley" finding most favour. Fortunately, however, this idea did not at all commend itself to the young lady, who found no charms in a spurious nobility which would lead to merciless chaffing in the dressing-rooms. She therefore put her tiny foot down at once and vetoed it. Something had to be done, however, and her father decided that if she refused a peerage a distinctive first name must be sought. Not knowing exactly where to find one which was suitable and at the same time not in common use he was reduced to looking in a dictionary. Whether it was a Latin one or not we can't say, but at any rate somehow he luckily stumbled across "Vesta," which seemed to him eminently suited for his purpose. On his proposing it to his daughter her ears were at once tickled by its novelty, for at that time no other music-hall singer

was known by the same name. It was forthwith decided that she should use it, and it was put into the programme for the next week. From that time forth the artist has been known as Miss Vesta Tilley, and the two names have now become so inseparably connected in the minds of all music-hall frequenters that it is impossible to hear one of them without immediately thinking of the other.

Though from this very early period of Miss Tilley's career there have been no backward steps, it must not be imagined that everything has been rose-coloured for her from the start. There was her mother as well as brothers and sisters to be provided for, and only her father and herself to do it. In the life of nearly every great artist there is at some time or another this same struggle to be endured, either for self alone or for others as well. It is so often the case, that one is inclined to doubt whether the really fine performer can be made without going through it. But though she had to put her youthful neck to the collar, we are quite sure that it must always have been the smartest of collars, and fortune does not at any time seem to have been very unkind. The first engagement in London was of course followed by others of frequent recurrence; but the provinces claimed an equal if not a greater share of her services. It was then that Miss Tilley began to acquire the enormous provincial popularity which is her unique possession. In the case of most other artists, success in the country is founded on past or present successes in town; but with her it is different. She has worked for provincial audiences always as earnestly as she has worked for London, and when it is said they fairly worship her it is no exaggeration. From the time she entered her teens, her name has been well known in the great towns of the North and Midland Counties, her popularity at the present time far surpassing that of any other music-hall star, male or female. If evidence of this were needed it is amply furnished by the fact that for two whole years she did not appear at all in London, simply because it was better worth her

while to stay in the country, and she only returned to town when the Metropolitan managers offered her a salary equivalent to what she was earning elsewhere.

That Miss Tilley's talent for acting pure and simple is very great is fully shown in the by-play and descriptive action she employs while rendering a song. She has, however, except on two occasions, stuck all through to the branch of her profession in which she started, never appearing on the boards of the theatrical stage except at Christmas. As a pantomime boy she has now for years been without rival, her engagement at the theatre of any of the large cities being quite sufficient to ensure the success of the production in which she is taking part. Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow, in fact all the great towns have claimed her services in turn, and it would be quite impossible to say in which she is the biggest favourite. On every occasion when she has played in pantomime, the artist has assumed a masculine character. Offers have frequently been made her to play leading girls' parts, notably that most popular of heroines "Cinderella," but though there is no doubt that she would be equally fascinating in skirts, she considers that the delineation of the youthful male is her mission, and she has unswervingly adhered to it throughout her career. The number of fairy heroes is not large, and she has naturally gone through the entire series in the course of her experience. She is rather diffident about her attainments, and fancies some characters much more than others, "Dick Whittington," "Aladdin," and "Robinson Crusoe" being her favourite parts, in the first named of which she has never been equalled.

The provinces have not, however, entirely monopolised the pantomime services of the London Idol, but unfortunately for her cockney votaries she has never had the same chances of distinguishing herself afforded her in London as elsewhere. Twice retained for Drury Lane pantomime, Miss Tilley has on neither occasion been given a proper opportunity for displaying her talents. This will appear strange when

it is said that in each instance she was engaged for the part of principal boy. Fate, nevertheless, seems to have been against her. It was the custom of the late Sir Augustus Harris to secure a number of artists of the same or similar calibre, to play one character; he would then choose from among them whichever suited his fancy when the moment came for finally allotting the

"Sinbad the Sailor," and being for lead, the hopes of the young artist must have run very high indeed. Though still little more than a child she had already made conquests all through the provinces, and was an established favourite in the London music halls. It is hardly to be wondered at then if she looked forward to an easy victory at the National Theatre. The company



MISS VESTA TILLEY

From Photo by DRAYCOTT, London and Birmingham

parts. The result was rather painful for the artists themselves, that is, for those who had to go to the wall. It seems curious that with such a genius at his command, Druriolanus, who knew so well the commercial and artistic value of a performer, should have ever placed the acknowledged chief of pantomime heroes in a secondary position. He did so, however, in the following circumstances. The first engagement was for the pantomime of

of which she was to form one included Mr. Arthur Roberts, Mr. James Fawn, Miss Constance Loseby, the Sisters Mario, and finally the late Miss Nellie Power. It was the last-named member of the company who proved the stumbling-block in Miss Tilley's path, but though the difficulty arose from her engagement it was not of her making. Miss Power, though now almost forgotten, so soon do the public lose sight of their favourites, had at that

time an immense vogue in the music halls. Originally a burlesque actress of repute, she had been on the variety stage for some years, and was at the zenith of her success. She had sung "La-di-da, or the City Toff," a ballad which, though its title does not sound encouraging, had a great mode a few years before, but at the date of which we are speaking all her previous efforts had been eclipsed by "Tiddy fol-lol," a song of the same kind, but infinitely its superior as regards words and music, if equally inane in its title. The tune was sung and whistled everywhere, and so great was its popularity that nothing would do for the manager of Drury Lane but that the song and the original singer must form part of his pantomime. Accordingly to Miss Power was entrusted the part of principal boy, without thought of the prior claims of the younger artist. The latter entered a vigorous protest, but it was no good. Sir—then Mr.—Augustus Harris was omnipotent in the world of pantomime, so she had to make the best of a bad bargain and content herself with the second boy's part. This must naturally have been a bitter disappointment, but her troubles did not end here; when rehearsals began she found that she was not even to be allowed to sing one of her own songs. Again she protested and petitioned, but all in vain; the manager was adamant and she was coldly informed that she must enact what the author had put down for her, no more and no less. It was useless for her to say that the song given her did not suit her in any way, and that in rendering it she could neither do justice to herself nor to the theatre; her pleadings were not listened to. Finally she had to give way, in so far that she consented to learn it, but though she appeared to acquiesce, in reality, she struck. When Boxing night arrived, and the time came for her song, she went on and sang it—absolutely correctly but without expression or action of any kind. The result may be imagined. Sir Augustus, who was standing at the wing, metaphorically, if not actually, tore out his hair by handfuls and on the singer leaving the stage, told her she might have her own way and sing whatever

song she liked. Accordingly at the next performance the original song, the very name of which has been long forgotten, was placed on the shelf, and in its place she sang "When will old England be herself again?" with the greatest success.

Miss Tilley's second taste of the glories of appearing before the London public as leading light of Drury Lane was hardly more gratifying than the first. Though at this time her position was too assured to admit of her being relegated to an inferior part, again circumstances arose which reduced her chances of distinguishing herself to a minimum. The original engagement was to play "Dick Whittington," her favourite part, but unluckily for London it was never fulfilled. Harris was not only always on the alert to seize the latest novelty or celebrity in the theatrical market, but he did not scruple to entirely upset his preconceived plans in order to turn his capture to the greatest pecuniary advantage. The name of Lady Dunlo (late of the charming Sisters Bilton of the halls) was just then almost more celebrated than any other all over England generally, and London in particular, so at whatever cost she had to appear in the pantomime. When the arrangement was once made there came the problem of how to give her talents such prominence as would satisfy the public. Her ladyship's physique and general style were not suited to a boy's part, and even if she had consented to take one, her patrician soul would have revolted against playing second fiddle to any other performer. Play a girl then she must; but the part of the Alderman's daughter in "Whittington" was not one that would give her sufficient opportunities, so the whole pantomime had to be changed. The choice of subjects in which the girl takes the lead is very limited; "Red Riding Hood" is not usually considered sufficiently strong to go on her own merits without being interwoven with some other story, and the "Sleeping Beauty" is hopeless from a modern point of view. There remained, therefore, only "Cinderella" and "Beauty and the Beast," and as the former of these had been

played only a year or two before, with Miss Kate Vaughan as the heroine, that also was placed out of the question. Now the story of Beauty's self-sacrifice, though one of the most charming of the old fairy tales, is not a good subject from the point of view of the pantomime producer, the main reason for this being that for nearly the whole of the performance the principal boy is not on the stage. He is turned into the beast in the first scene, and in that sad plight he remains till the last. It was this character that fell to the lot of the best principal boy in England, and for the second time deprived her of the chance of showing the London public how far she is ahead of every other artist as a pantomime hero.

But though she has met with disappointments in London, Miss Tilley's pantomime engagements in the country constitute one long series of successes. The enormous enthusiasm she has aroused has not confined itself to the theatre alone, but has spread all over the town in which she has been at the time appearing. Not contented with shouting themselves hoarse while the performance was proceeding, the audience has often waited, almost to a man, and escorted her back to her hotel. On one of these occasions, if not more, the horses have been taken out of her brougham and she has been dragged home in a procession which for genuine enthusiasm would have rivalled one of the triumphs of the Cæsars. In fact, so much do her audiences love her, that in some instances their admiration has caused them to be rather too exacting. As a case in point, last year when she played at the Prince of Wales's, Liverpool, she took part in nine scenes out of ten, and sang no less than five songs, which alone is no light task for an artist who puts so much work into a song as Miss Tilley does. Even with this the audience would not be satisfied, and their favourite had often to make them a speech before they would allow the performance to proceed. When it is added that this pantomime ran for thirteen consecutive weeks, that is a whole quarter of a year, it is hardly surprising that she has decided for the first time since she can remember, not

to play in pantomime at all this year but to "take a rest" by singing at two or three London music halls.

As has been already said, however, except twice when she went on tour with burlesque companies of her own, and for a few weeks each Christmas, Miss Tilley's whole life has been spent on the music-hall stage: and though her pantomime records are brilliant, it is as a music-hall singer she has really to be considered. Granted the genius for her work, which she undoubtedly possesses, the artist has had few, if any, unusual advantages. Of teaching she has had practically none; her father taught her to walk on and off the stage, but there her theatrical training ended. Singing, elocution, dancing (which she can if she likes, though she does not often), and last, but not least, acting—all appear to have come to her quite naturally; with what happy result is amply proved by her enormous success, both here and in America, where she has been christened "the Irving of the Halls." It is difficult to say in what she most excels. She can be quietly satirical or broadly comic, patriotic or pathetic, as occasion demands. The character, however, with which her name will be always inseparably associated, is that of the fatuous swell—what used to be called a masher, and is known in America as a dude. In this she is unapproached and irreproachable. Everything is perfect, from the fit of her coat to the management of her eye-glass. The silly drawl, the self-conscious giggle or attempted bluster, are all drawn to the life, and only sufficiently accentuated to raise them from the plane of stupidity to that of the really ludicrous. No one has ever been more happy in depicting the jerky walk, the studied ogle, and the would-be rakish air of the youthful lady-killer; and it is astonishing to find that a woman should have such an accurate appreciation of the manners and movements of one of the other sex. One is almost tempted to use the word photographic in describing these impersonations; but it is an inadequate term, as they are endowed with a touch of genius, which lifts them above the level of mere reflections of the characteristics of a class. It is as a singer of de-

scriptive songs, however, that Miss Tilley fully shows how really great are her acting abilities. Simply attired in an ordinary morning or evening suit, she will depict, by means of action and expression, the whole series of characters which form the subjects of the different verses. In turn, she brings before our mind's eye, by the merest suggestion of voice and manner, the shop boy

driving rain. One is just beginning to think that hot brandy and a foot-tub full of mustard and water are the only things to save her life, when with a flash of her little hand the collar is turned down, the hair tidied, and she is once more the smart young gentleman, bowing his acknowledgments to an enthusiastic house. Of course, apart from this class of song, she has given us



"THE LONDON IDOL"

From Photo by BROWN, BAYNES & BELL, Liverpool and London

masquerading as a millionaire, the barmaid to whom he pays attention, the burglar, the miser, the race-course tout, or the unlucky devotee of the turf. She has only to turn up her collar, pull a lock of hair over her forehead, make a wry face, and turn up the bottoms of her trousers, one loses sight of the foot-lights and the painted marble hall in which she is singing, to picture her trudging through oceans of slush in the

many excellent character studies, in addition to her "Piccadilly Johnnies," of which "The Militiaman," "The Eton Boy," and "My friend, the Major" are good examples. The latter is specially interesting, as having been studied from an actual man, and the song written round the subject to order. In all these impersonations, though she expends such care upon them that one can only compare it to miniature painting, there

is never anything in her style to suggest over-study, nor is she ever mechanical.

Of course, Miss Tilley gives most attention to the acting, so to speak, of her songs, but she does not let her care end there. Not the least of her accomplishments is that she has fully acquired the art of dressing, which is shown not only in the clothes she wears, but in the way she puts them on. As a rule, a woman in the clothes of an ordinary man is a lamentable sight, a veritable calamity of calamities. Nothing is so ill adapted to show her natural form to advantage, and in no other garb is it so difficult for her to disguise it. With the London Idol, however, things are quite different. When in her ordinary clothes nothing could be more feminine, but with her male garments she seems to put on the man altogether. Though, happily, she is *not*, as has been often reported, in a consumption, or suffering from any fell disease — indeed, she says she was never better — Miss Tilley's figure is naturally slight; but it is not only this that makes her appearance so much more successful than that of other performers who attempt the same line of business. Everything she wears is of the latest cut, and is made in the last cry of the fashion, rather in front of it, in fact, than otherwise. Nothing is more applicable to her than the words of one of her recent songs, beginning :

The very latest thing in collars, the very
latest thing in ties.

Hat, boots, gloves, all are perfect; and yet however faultless may be the costume,

the effect is never that of a fashion plate or a tailor's dummy. Due credit for this should be given to the tailors, Messrs. Samuelson, of Maddox Street, who have for some time assisted the artist to make herself the glass of fashion and the mould of form. How the rapid changes of these elaborate suits are effected between the songs is a mystery. Every thing is made exactly as it would be for wearing in an ordinary way, and very often there is an entire alteration of dress, even to a different shirt. When one thinks of what one considers a rapid change of one's own clothes it is hardly surprising to learn that it takes Miss Tilley and two dressers to do it. It was said that on the occasion of her third and last visit to America, the whole of the stalls for the opening performance were taken by young men, who sat and took in every detail of her clothes, for the purpose of ordering Vesta Tilley suits the next day, but how far this is true we do not know. One thing we do know for certain about this engagement, namely, that it was for two months and that she remained nine, drawing a salary of three substantial figures the whole time. So great was its success that offers are continually being made to the artist to return, £400 a week having been refused by her quite lately. She prefers to stay in England at any rate for the present, and we are selfish enough to hope that she will never leave us for very long, for people who have brought their art to such perfection as Vesta Tilley has done are not easy to find, and we treasure them accordingly. Would that there were more like her.



THE AUTOMATON.

WRITTEN BY REGINALD BACCHUS AND RANGER GULL

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS



ABOUT the middle of this century public interest in the game of chess received a remarkable impetus from the arrival in London of a man named Greet, a Jew from Poland, who brought with him an automatic chess-playing figure. This figure had been first exhibited at Prague some six months before, and its subsequent tour of the great cities on the continent of Europe had excited an extraordinary interest. Most of the best-known masters of the game had taken up its challenge in St. Petersburg, Paris and Vienna, but one and all had suffered a defeat, inexplicable in its suddenness and completeness.

Mr. Greet now announced that his figure was ready to play against, and beat, any one in England who should care to oppose it. The Automaton (for this was the name that the public had given to the figure) was exhibited a number of times in London, and on each occasion a crowded and mystified audience witnessed the uncomfortable spectacle of an image made of wood and iron, defeating in an easy and masterful manner several well-known exponents of the most difficult game in the world.

The machine consisted of a large

figure of wood, roughly hewn and painted to resemble a man. It was about twice the size of a full-grown human being, and when playing was seated in a chair made on a very open design. It was quite motionless, except for the jerky movements of its arm and of the two long steel pincers that served it for fingers. It made no sound save the one word "check," that rasped out from its wooden throat, and the final "check-mate," pitched in a higher and more triumphal key.

This soulless machine was a master of all the known gambits, and seemed to play them with a supreme inspiration not granted to any living professor of the game. Public excitement about the matter was acute, and speculation ran high as to the probable methods employed to bring about so marvellous a result. Every facility was afforded to the public for inspection. Before and after each game the figure was opened in full view of those among the audience who might care to come upon the stage, and the closest scrutiny revealed nothing but a mass of cogs and wheels, among which it was quite impossible for a man to be concealed. Moreover, Mr. Greet was quite willing to allow the Automaton to be moved about on the stage at the direction of its opponent, so that

the theory of electrical communication with a player concealed beneath the platform, had to be abandoned by those who had conceived such an opinion. During the games, Mr. Greet sat or walked about on the stage, but two members of the audience were always accommodated with chairs by the chess table, and it was obvious that there could be no communication between the figure and its proprietor. In this way the public mind became unpleasantly harassed, and Mr. Greet's purse grew to a comfortable fullness with the entrance money of the hundreds who blocked the door at each performance. The uncanny nature of the whole affair attracted numbers to the spectacle who did not even know the moves of the game, and many a man set steadfastly to the learning of chess, and the baffling of the problems proposed in the weekly papers, that he might better comprehend the nature of the mystery that was puzzling London.

So with a *clientèle* composed of professors and amateurs of the game, engineers and scientists, and the great General Public that loves a mystery, Mr. Greet might have remained in London for a long period of great pecuniary satisfaction. Then, without any warning, it was announced in the papers that the Automaton had made its last move, for the present at any rate, in the metropolis, and would shortly set out on a tour through the principal towns of the provinces.

Birmingham, Manchester and all the great centres of the North and Midlands were visited with the usual triumphs, and one morning the public were startled at their breakfast-tables with the brief announcement that Mr. Greet would back his Automaton against any chess player in the world for £2,000 a side, the match to take place in the Theatre Royal at Bristol within three weeks' time.

No one had been more completely mystified or more intensely amazed at the triumphal progress of the Automaton than Mr. Stuart Dryden, considered by most people to be the leading chess player in England. He had himself refrained from hazarding his reputation in a contest with the thing, for, after

carefully watching the easy defeat of those noted professors who had been bold enough to put its skill to the test, he had been forced to confess that in this machine, by some unfathomable means or other, had been placed an understanding of the game that he could not hope to compete with. He felt, however, that a time must come when he would be obliged to court the defeat that he knew to be certain, and the growing nearness of the contingency embittered every day of his life. He worked ceaselessly at problems of the game, and studied with the greatest care the records of the matches that had been played against the Automaton, but he found it quite impossible to coax himself into the least degree of self-confidence.

Professor Dryden was a bachelor, possessed of a small regular income, which he had always supplemented largely with his earnings at chess by way of stake-money and bets. He was a man of solitary habit and lived much alone in a small house in the north-western quarter of London. An old woman attended to all his wants; he was surrounded by a large and complete library, and between his little house and the St. George's Chess Club he spent almost the entire portion of his life. It was his custom to rise early every morning, and after a long walk in the Regent's Park to arrive at the Chess Club about noon. There, as a rule, he stayed till about ten o'clock of the evening, when he would return to a quiet supper and several hours with his books.

On the morning that Mr. Greet's announcement had been made public to the world, he left the house very early indeed, before the arrival of the daily papers.

On this morning he was in an exceptionally bad temper. He was by nature a sullen man, and the continued triumphs of this Automaton, that pointed to a probable reduction in his income, had been gradually making him more and more sour. Then, to complete his misery, he found last night, on his return from the club, that by the failure of a company, considered sound by the most sceptical, his small private

means had been reduced almost to a vanishing point. All night long he had lain sleepless with anxiety, and as he tramped the Regent's Park this morning his head burnt feverishly and his heart was very bitter against the world. The glorious freshness of the morning kindled no spark of happiness in his morose mind, and the children who met him stalking along the path ran nervously from his dour expression. He examined the future with care, but could see nothing but ruin before him, as what now remained of his private income would be quite insufficient for his support. Moreover, in confident expectation of a successful season at the chess-table, he had of late allowed himself many extravagancies, and his creditors were beginning to put unpleasant pressure upon him. Several tournaments, from which he was confident of gain, had been put off, since all interest was centred in the Automaton, and a mere contest between man and man fell tame after the almost supernatural strife with Mr. Greet's image. Poor Mr. Dryden was unable to compose his ruffled temper or to suggest to himself any plan for the future, and wearying of the monotonous greenness of the park he turned his steps towards the club, though it was much earlier than he was wont to go there.

The St. George's Chess Club was a temple sacred to the upper circles of chess-players. The social or financial position of a member mattered little, but it was essential that he should be a real expert in the practice of the game. In this way a very motley and cosmopolitan gathering was usually to be found in the comfortable club-house situated in an inexpensive street near Hanover Square.

Mr. Dryden walked straight upstairs to the smoking-room, and was astounded to find it, usually so empty in the morning, quite crowded with an excited throng of members. All of those present had attained or passed the middle age of life. Every face carried some strongly-marked personality, and a rapid conversation was being carried on in different languages.

Mr. Dryden was inexpressibly an-

noyed. He had promised himself peace and had found chaos, and his ugly face assumed a still more repulsive expression. He looked the very embodiment of friendless old age; a sour, tired old man whose death would conjure a tear from no single eye.

A little Frenchman was the first to notice Dryden's entrance. He leapt to his feet and waved his hand towards him.



"THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF FRIENDLESS OLD AGE"

"*Tiens, Dryden!*" he exclaimed; "*voilà notre sauveur.*" The babble of the room stopped at the words, and all faces

turned to the door. The old man stood there, slowly furling his umbrella and looked enquiringly round. Then he spoke slowly.

"You will pardon me, gentlemen, if I do not quite understand. "Why saviour, and of what?"

"Why, *our* saviour! We're going to try for Greet's dollars," drawled a voice from the corner. "You're the only man for us. We'll put up the chips."

"Once more I am at a loss," said Mr. Dryden; "M. Laroche and Mr. Sutherland, you have puzzled me. I presume you are talking about the only Greet that interests us. What new thing has he or his Automaton done?"

Twenty members shouted the explanation, and, half smothered in newspapers, Mr. Dryden was forced into a chair, and formally asked if he would act as representative of the club and take up Mr. Greet's challenge.

"It has beaten all the rest of us," said the President sadly, "but surely in the first chess association in Europe there must be one player who can get the better of that infernal machine. There *shall* be one, and you shall be that one, Dryden. You can take a line through this. I know by exactly how much you are my master, and that thing showed about the same superiority over me. So you'll start about square. This is the scheme we've arranged. The club finds all the money if you lose. If you win, you take half and we pocket the rest. That's fair enough, is it not?"

Mr. Dryden did not take long to decide. However sure he felt that he was no match for the mysterious intelligence that guided the hand of the Automaton, the temptation of the money, and his own straitened condition left only one course possible to him.

"I accept," he said; "make all arrangements in my name, and let me know time and place and anything else that may be necessary. For these three weeks I will shut myself up. If there is anything about the game that I do not already know, perhaps in this absolute seclusion I may wring it from my brain. I suppose that I shall see you all, or most of you, on the appointed

day. *Au revoir*, gentlemen. I thank you very much for the honour you have done me."

The members rose in a body, a motley crowd of all nations, each one greatly excited, and congratulations in every tongue smote on the back of Mr. Dryden's head, as, shielded by the President, he walked sedately down the staircase.

Left to himself, he set out in the direction of Charing Cross, for he entertained the notion of paying a visit to an old friend in the country. This gentleman, the Rev. Henry Druce, was incumbent of a village cure in Kent, and though his name was unknown to the public, he enjoyed among the professors of chess a high reputation as a master of the game. In the seclusion of Mr. Druce's peaceful vicarage Mr. Dryden felt sure that he would find rest for his worried brain, and valuable suggestions for the work that he was to do.

The train wandered happily out of the suburbs into the pretty county of Kent, and after many tiresome waits drew up at last at a tiny wayside station, all white in a gorgeous setting of many-coloured flowers. The glare of the sun's rays that beat back from the glowing platform into Mr. Dryden's tired eyes staggered him for a moment, as he stepped out of the gloom of the carriage. The hot quivering atmosphere was very distinct to the eye, like the hot-air waves that one sees above a shaded lamp. The country was full of dull, murmuring noises, and among them the voices of the porters and the rumble of the train seemed indefinite and unreal.

Mr. Dryden was unable at once to assimilate himself to the new surroundings, and long after the train had banded over the points and glided away into the haze he still stood looking vaguely over the broad fields, scattered with lazy cattle, that lay against the railway on the other side. He was startled into consciousness by a voice asking if he wished to travel on the omnibus that was about to start for the village. Following the man to where, in the dusty road, a boy in a big straw hat was lazily flicking the flies from the two

sleepy horses that stood dejectedly in front of the little yellow omnibus, he was presently jolting into view of the scattered houses of the hamlet. The vicarage was an old-world house in an old-world garden, and as Mr. Dryden walked up the white-flagged path to the porch, he was afforded a view of Mr. Druce, comfortably disposed for his afternoon nap in a long chair by the window. The vicar was, however, delighted at the intrusion, and very excited by Mr. Dryden's tale of Greet's challenge and his own acceptance. They talked for a while about the mysterious figure and its inexplicable victories, till suddenly Mr. Druce, who throughout the conversation had been somewhat hesitating and shy of manner, turned to his visitor and said :

"It appears to me that in London you have ceased in a measure to enquire into the reason for these wonders. You are beginning to accept the victories of the Automaton as inevitable, and to believe, I am amazed to find, that the thing is in reality an almost supernatural triumph of science. Now surely, Dryden, you cannot think that that steel hand is guided by any other than a human intelligence. It is absurd ; you might just as well believe in magic and the black arts. I have not seen it, but I read, and am told, that facility is given to the audience for examination ; that it is opened, and is apparently empty of aught save machinery ; that it is detached from the stage or its chair ; in fact, that its secret is so clever that every-one has been baffled. Now it is quite plain to me that somewhere, either inside it, or close at hand, is a man, possibly unknown to us all, but obviously a chess player of extraordinary brilliance, who by some means or other plays the Automaton's game. That is quite certain. The problem is, therefore, who is the man ? The names

and the movements of all the great players are known to us through the papers. I can tell you in a minute where is Iflinski, or Le Jeune, or Moore. Besides, there are not half-a-dozen men in the world who could have played the games so far recorded. Now I have a theory. I am a good Christian, I believe, both by profession and practice, and I have hesitated long in my mind before I was compelled to believe in this theory of mine. It brings me to think evil of a man who has been my friend, and were I not so certain, Dryden, I would never breathe it to a soul. You are the first to hear. Listen. Of course, I long ago gave up the supposition of a wonderful scientific discovery, or anything of that sort. Since then I have simply been trying to find out the man. I have compared the games played by



"COMFORTABLY DISPOSED FOR HIS AFTERNOON NAP"

Mr. Greet's figure with those played by most of the greater living masters, and I have found in one case a striking similarity. Even then I should not have spoken had not coincidence aided me still further ; had not, in fact, my friendship for the man I suspect enabled me to follow his movements and be privy of his disappearances. It is—and I am grieved that he should have lent himself to such a deception—Murray."

Mr. Dryden gave a gasp of astonishment.

"Murray!" he said, "Philip Murray of the Queen's Library, the bibliophile, the old white-haired gentleman who comes sometimes to the club and plays a game or two. I can hardly believe it, Druce."

"It was hard for me to believe it myself," said Mr. Druce, "and I have only told you half of what I know. In my mind the truth of the thing admits of no doubt. I will tell you more of my proofs."

"But the man couldn't have done it," broke in Mr. Dryden; "he couldn't have beaten these men, he couldn't have played the games. I've seen him playing in the club, he is no extraordinary player. No, Druce, find some one else for the spirit of the Automaton."

"Don't be so impatient, and don't be led astray by the idea of Murray's incapacity," said Mr. Druce. "You don't know him properly, neither you nor any one else at the club; but I do. He cares nothing for notoriety. Chess is his recreation, not his business; but I can tell you, Dryden,—and many hundreds of games have Murray and I played together,—that he is the first master of the game in England. Enough for his ability. Listen to these facts. How long ago is it that the Automaton was first exhibited in Prague? Eight months exactly. At that time Murray disappeared from England and was absent for six months, precisely the length of time that Greet was taking his figure through the big cities of Europe. The fact alone of his disappearance may be only a coincidence, but look at this. My sister Lizzie's husband is at the Embassy in Vienna. She saw Murray three times in the streets during the time that the Automaton was there. She mentioned the fact in a letter to me, because, she said, he seemed to avoid her in so strange a manner. Tom Rollit, writing from Antwerp, told me how he met Murray in a *café*, and how constrained he seemed. The day was the second day after Greet and his figure had begun their matches in that city. I didn't pay much attention to this at the time,

but after the Automaton had come to London, and I had repeatedly called on Murray to have a chat about the thing, and been as often told that he was away, I became suspicious. He is a man who has all his life been most reluctant to leave his home, and after the first time that in my study of the games I had noticed a resemblance between Murray's play and that of the Automaton, my suspicions became very strong. It was then that I remembered his several journeys to Europe just before his long absence. He has always professed an extra distaste for continental travel. I remember too, how I had met Edouard Roulain, the man who has had such an extraordinary success in Berlin as a prestidigitateur, in the hall of Murray's house on the occasion of one of my visits. When I asked him about the man—for I should like to have met him—he changed the subject at once and somewhat rudely. Again—it is really wonderful how so much circumstantial evidence has come my way—he was in Manchester when the Automaton was there. I was calling, and I could not help noticing that the maid who showed me to the drawing-room carried a letter addressed in his handwriting, that bore the postmark of that town. Mrs. Murray put the letter quickly in her pocket, and when I asked her where her husband was, she told me that he had gone to Edinburgh about a book. You must agree with me, Dryden, that that is enough. Well, I've got one last proof, the most conclusive of all. When they went to Birmingham, I followed and took a room that commanded a view of the stage door of the hall. All day long I sat in that window, concealed by the curtains, and every day, sometimes only just before the show, sometimes two or three times during the day, I saw a man, heavily bearded and with spectacles, walk into the hall, with Murray's walk. Once I saw him with Greet, but generally he was alone. That that man was Murray I have no doubt at all. He is the brain of the Automaton. Philip Murray has worked one of the biggest deceptions on the world that has ever been conceived, and I doubt not he has nicely feathered his own nest in the

working of it. What do you think of my story?"

"I own that I am fairly astounded," said Mr. Dryden, "and I cannot think how it is done. I tell you I have looked inside the thing, from both sides, and it's full of wheels. I've pushed it about the stage; and I've sat there during the play and never taken my eyes off it."

"Did Greet let you put your hand inside and touch the machinery," said Mr. Druce.

"Well, I never thought of doing that, nor, when I come to think of it, did any one else; but I saw wheels, and cogs and springs, as distinctly as I see you."

"That can be arranged by an elaborate system of mirrors, some improvement on the Pepper's Ghost idea. Edouard Roulain is quite clever enough to fool any one by a trick of that sort. It's my belief that Murray gets inside it, I don't think it could be worked by any other means. I expect that the plot was conceived somewhat after this fashion. Edouard Roulain, in the course of his investigations, stumbled on a really exceptionally brilliant idea for an optical delusion. It then occurred to him that this idea might be put to more profitable use than mere exhibition. How he hit on the notion of the chess-playing Automaton, I can't think. He has been a friend of Murray's for some time, I found that out; and very likely he told Murray of his find and asked for suggestions. Murray may have got it from some old book, or perhaps thought it out himself. Wait a minute though, I never told you how I proved Roulain's connection with the affair. When the Automaton was in London, I met him repeatedly about the town; but that was before I was so sure about Murray, and I didn't think much of it. He had grown a moustache, but I recognised him easily. I daresay he's gone now, he wasn't in Birmingham."

"What about Greet?" said Mr. Dryden.

"Oh, he is only a figurehead; perhaps he doesn't even know the secret. He has been an operative manager all over Europe and the States; he took Roulain to New York when he made his

first great success there. He is about the best business manager they could have."

"Well, I suppose I must grant you that Murray does work it—exactly how he does it doesn't matter much. What I want to think out is, how does this knowledge help me? Suppose that you or I give the thing away, what do we gain? Have you thought of doing it yourself?"

"No, I have not. To tell you the truth, I have rather been enjoying the joke, and were it not for my orders, I should have in time thrown down the gauntlet myself. If there is one man in England who knows Murray's play, it is myself, and I think I might have got the better of him. The feeling of mystery that has surrounded the Automaton has helped him immensely: he would not have had so complete and easy a success if his opponents had not been frightened out of their best game. I could see that by studying the records of the play. As it is, I shall do nothing; but if this knowledge will be any help to you in your game, you are most heartily welcome to it. Believe me, that I shall so far escape from my seclusion as to be a most interested spectator of the match at Bristol."

"I am immensely obliged to you, old friend," said Dryden; "I will make it no secret from you that I am in a very bad way for money. A totally unlooked-for misfortune has deprived me of the greater part of my regular income, and the interest that has followed this Automaton has caused several of the important tournaments, that I should have made money out of, to be abandoned. If I can win this match, I get £1,000, which will set me straight, and from my victory I shall gain a reputation that will put me in the way of much future gain. If I were to write a book on chess, it would enormously enhance its sale."

"I am sorry to hear of your distress," said Mr. Druce, "which I had never suspected, and I am the more glad that I may be of a little use to you. You will stop to dinner, of course, and before you go I will give you the records of a great many of Murray's games. He has had enough of his mysterious

triumph, and it is quite time the joke came to an end."

Dinner was quiet and pleasant, and though the presence of Charles Cunliffe, the curate, who was fresh from Magdalen, and cared for nothing except stamped leather bindings and the fine embroidery of a cope, excluded chess from the conversation, the three men found the subject of continental travel a convenient exchange for opinions. Mr. Cunliffe had in undergraduate days paid several visits to Boulogne, and held elaborate ideas on the subject of racial distinctions.

Mr. Dryden bade farewell to the two clergymen in the little station, now cool and pleasant in the moonlight, and during the seventy minutes of his journey to Charing Cross, examined feverishly the bundle of papers that Mr. Druce had given him.

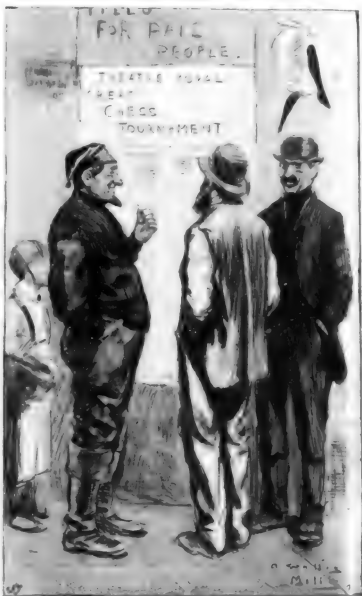
For the next week he kept himself strictly from the world and held unceasingly to his task of investigating Mr. Murray's methods. At the end of that time there came to him the conviction that he had met his master. As before he had known that the uncanny spirit of the Automaton would surely beat him, so now he realised with a pain—all the worse because it swept away the hopes that Mr. Druce's story had inspired—that in the brain of the little old Scotch librarian was the same power, none the less real now that it had lost its odour of mystery.

Meanwhile his creditors had become more instant in their demands, and poor Mr. Dryden, crushed with despondency and overwhelmed with debt, conceived a hatred towards the automatic figure and its inmate that increased in bitterness as each day brought him nearer to the contest which

he felt certain would prove his Waterloo.

For the three weeks he kept entirely to his own house and held no communication with the outside world, except for a short correspondence with the President of the club on the matter of the challenge, and the arrangements for day and hour. He received one short letter from Mr. Druce, wishing him good fortune and assuring him that he would be among the audience to watch the downfall of the Automaton.

Whatever mistrust of his powers he might entertain, it was not his own



"THE COMING MATCH HAD AROUSED EXTREME INTEREST IN THE TOWN"

money that he would sacrifice by abandoning the match, and in the interests of the club he was bound to go through with the affair.

Four days before the match he came to Bristol and took apartments in a house in the Hot-wells, that faced the river. The coming match had aroused extreme interest in the town, and crowds were continually assembled about the station at Temple Mead, in hope of a prior view of the Automaton.

On the day after his arrival he sat for many hours at the window, watching the tall spars of the ships show stark against the cliffs as the vessels were towed to and from the city. The chatter of the riverside loafers that reached his ears treated always of the Automaton, and the improbable speculations that were hazarded brought a weary smile to his face. About sunset he left the house, and, following a winding path, climbed the edge of the gorge, coming out upon the Clifton Down. For a little while he sat there, watching the silent beauty of the scene. The dying sun had lent a greater glory to the city that sloped from the sides of its seven hills to the hollow beneath him, and the Avon traced a line of rosy flame through the gorge, till it lost itself at last in a forest of masts and the dull smoke-cloud of the furnaces. Then the sun seemed to grow in size and rush quicker to its bed. For a moment it hung over the Somersetshire woods, firing every tree into a glory of a moment. Then it was suddenly gone, and the white coolness of evening came directly over the country and the town. The majesty of hill, champaign and valley, lent an infinite composure to the trouble of Mr. Dryden's thoughts, and presently he began to take the road to the city, purposing a cheerful dinner at some inn. A merry party of travellers filled the coffee-room at the "Greyhound" in Broad Mead, and their amusing conversation about the Automaton induced Mr. Dryden to disclose his identity. He became the centre and hero of the party, and two hours passed with a pleasant speed.

About nine o'clock, a little rosy with wine, he set out on his way homewards. The mischance of a random turning led him from his proper road, and presently

he came out upon the open space of the Queen's Square. The comfortable freshness of the air invited him to stay, and he sat for some time upon a convenient seat. He had come into a pleasant reverie, in which the Automaton played more the part of a comedian than of the villain, when a rumbling noise lifted his eyes to the roadway. A large cart of the strangest conceivable shape, somewhat like the body of a grand piano set upon its edge, was being driven past. It swung round the corner that led to the theatre, which was close at hand, and he heard it clatter for a little over the cobbles before it came to a sudden stop. He had a strong idea that this must be the arrival of the Automaton, and without quite knowing why he did so, got up and followed. On reaching the theatre he saw the cart drawn up a little beyond it. He hesitated to go nearer, and then noticed that the gallery door stood a little upon the jar. In a pure spirit of adventure he pushed it back and made a difficult progress down the long dim-lit passage and up the dark rickety staircase. When a plump of cold air upon his face told him that he had won the entrance into the body of the house, he made his way delicately to a seat and sat awaiting possibilities. He was not long in suspense before he heard distant voices and a considerable noise of a heavy body being advanced over rollers. Then a light came out from the wings and went across the stage. It seemed a tiny speck of flame in the great blackness of the theatre, lighting little save the face of the man who carried it. Mr. Dryden made out a heavy moustache and concluded at once that this must be Edouard Roulain. The man stooped and lit a few of the centre footlights, which turned a square patch of light on the stage. A hand lamp was burning in one of the wings, but through the rest of the house the darkness thickened backwards till it wrapped the gallery, in which Mr. Dryden sat, with an impenetrable gloom. Presently the noise of rollers began again, and two men came into the patch of light, pushing the great painted figure of the Automaton.

One, a person of ostentatious figure,

he recognised immediately as Greet, and with a thrill of excitement he realised that the other, a little bearded man of a peculiar gait, could be none other than Murray himself. The language of the three men was deadened by the distance, but he saw that the one whom he supposed to be Roulain was busied about the mechanism of the figure. When the clicking of the wheels stopped, Mr. Murray walked up to the figure and spoke a few words to Greet and Roulain. Mr. Dryden could not hear distinctly, but a loud laugh came from the two men on the stage. Then Mr. Murray took off his coat, opened the Automaton and stepped inside it. Presently its arm began to move and the steel pincers of its fingers to shift about on the table.

He was only inside for a few minutes, and as soon as he reappeared, Mr. Dryden, in the fear that they might make it a business to see to the closing of all doors, began to fumble his way out of the theatre. Providentially the door of the gallery entrance was still open, and when he had gained the street, he hid in a doorway a few yards distant from the stage entrance. The men were talking as they came out, and he recognised Murray's voice at once. "That will be all right, Greet," it was saying; "you had better come and see me in the morning. I am staying in Bedminster—42, Leigh Road; it's across the river, you must take the ferry."

They passed down the road, and when they had gone out of sight, Mr. Dryden began his journey back to the rooms in the Hot-wells.

Though nothing had been revealed to him that he had not been already cognisant of, the fact of having been with his own eyes privy to the secret of the trickery, made him greatly excited. He was conscious of a distinct hatred for Mr. Murray that he had not before experienced. There was something of jealousy in his anger. He bitterly grudged the old librarian his invention of the Automaton and the money that was coming to him from its exhibition. If he could only beat it, he thought, and then the dreadful feeling of hopelessness, that had left him during the varied excitements of the last few hours,

came back and beset him with redoubled force. The much-needed repose of sleep was denied him, for all through that night the nightmare figure of the Automaton was with him in his dreams, and when, late next morning, he left his bed, his face was drawn and haggard and his mind a maelstrom of hatred and despair.

The day was very wild for the season, and continual thunderstorms gathered and broke their fury about the crags of the Avon Gorge. Mr. Dryden did not leave the house, but watched from his window the thunder-clouds drive through the funnel made by the cliffs, and scatter over the houses and fields beyond. He felt a companionship in the ill-humour of the elements, and the shrieking of the wind played a fantastic accompaniment to the bitter theme of his thoughts. Hatred of Murray was echoed in every scream of the gale, in every splash of the driven rain against the window-panes, while the roaring menace of the thunder fashioned his anger into an ever-growing self-confidence. All through the afternoon, as the rage of the storm grew stronger his spirits rose higher, and at dinner a brilliant idea came to him. He would surprise Mr. Murray in some quiet place on his way to the theatre, and make known to him his discovery of the trick. The knowledge that the secret was out, coming to him at so critical a moment in the career of the Automaton must, he felt sure, have a deterrent effect on Mr. Murray's play, while his own knowledge that within the painted figure his invisible rival was uneasily fearful, would lend a confident strength to himself.

The prospect of meeting the spirit of the Automaton in the flesh awoke other possibilities in his mind, and at first he cursed himself for not having conceived a plot for the kidnapping of his antagonist. However, it was now too late, and he dismissed the idea with the reflection that even had he thought of it before he could have with difficulty found trustworthy accomplices. About half-past seven he set out for the meeting that he promised himself. The gloom of the day had in no way abated and it was already quite dark. What

he had overheard of Mr. Murray's conversation with Greet suggested the river ferry to him as an advisable place, and there, about eight o'clock, he commenced to wait. The match was to be played at 9.30, and the doors were not open to the public till half-an-hour before that time, so he judged it quite certain that Mr. Murray would start for the theatre some time between eight and nine. The loneliness of the place lent horror to the storm, but Mr. Dryden cared little for the drenching rain or the flaming lightning as he staggered against the wind to keep his post by the ferry. Some twenty minutes had gone when a vivid flash lit the surrounding scene into half-a-minute's uncanny radiance, and he saw the figure of a man detach itself from the black shadow of the houses and come to the top of the river bank. Then all was dark again. The wind blew him the sound of a familiar voice shouting for the ferryman, and through the noise of the gale he seemed to recognise the rasping intonation of the Automaton's "Check." A lighted doorway gave up another figure carrying a lantern, and he could just see the two grope their way down the greasy flags that led to the boat. The tide was nearly at its lowest, and long oily rolls of mud sloped from the roadway on either side to where the last of the ebb hurried on its race to the sea. The power of the current made the crossing a long one, and he could only see the intermittent twinkle of the lantern through the rain. For a long way it moved slowly up the stream and then edged gradually back towards the opposite landing place. There was a grating noise, the chink of a coin, and Mr. Dryden saw the figure of a man that limped a little come laboriously up the difficult path. He waited in the shadow, and when Mr. Murray came full into the light of the lamp that marked the ferry-place, stepped forward and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Ah, Murray," he said, "we are well met; for though this evening brings us another meeting, I had rather I found you here. I have a matter to discuss with you."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the other, in a voice that shook with ill-

repressed astonishment. "You have made a mistake. I do not know you, nor is my name Murray. I beg you will excuse me, I am about a business that presses."

"Don't be foolish, Murray," said Mr. Dryden. "I tell you I recognise you; you've as much time as I have for a talk."

"Again, sir, I repeat that you are wrong," said the other. "I am not Murray, and your interference is impertinent. Good night."

"Oh, you aren't Murray, aren't you; you think to face it out!" said Mr. Dryden; "but I know you, you fraud. What about these?" And, making a rapid step forward, he caught at his companion's beard with both hands. It came away at once, jerking the spectacles with it. They fell and shattered on the pavement.

"Now are you Murray?" shouted Mr. Dryden in a voice of passion. "Damn you, you *shall* own it! I've found out all about you and the Automaton trick, and I've come here for a little business talk. If you'll only be sensible, we can soon come to terms."

"You have discovered my identity and you have me at a disadvantage," said Mr. Murray. "What do you want of me? Tell me quickly, for the time presses."

"There can be no match till I come, so you needn't hurry," said Mr. Dryden. "Listen. I must have that money, and it's just possible that you may beat me. I didn't come here to threaten, only to frighten you out of your play by discovering my knowledge. It was your refusal to acknowledge yourself that gave me the idea. Now here is my proposal. You let me win, and I say nothing; beat me, and I expose you. An exposure would cost you a lot more than the £2,000 you lose to me."

"I shall do nothing of the sort," said Mr. Murray; "you make a great mistake if you think you can bully me. I had known you, Mr. Dryden, as a gentleman of good manners and repute. I am sorry to find out my mistake. You may do your worst, prove the trick if you can. Now let me pass."

"You refuse then; well, you shan't go.



"THE FACE SHOWED WHITE ABOVE THE BLACK WATER."

Curse you, Murray, I must have the money. Don't struggle or I shall hurt you. Oh, you will, will you? Take that, then."

Swinging his heavily-mounted stick, he struck the old librarian a crushing blow behind the ear. The old man fell headlong, and, rolling over, came upon the mud slope. Down this he began to slide, gathering force as he went, till Mr. Dryden, who was watching, aghast at his action, saw the stream catch the feet and swing the whole body round into the river. For a second the face showed white above the black water. Then it was gone into the darkness.

For a short time Mr. Dryden stood thinking. He found to his astonishment that he knew no remorse. One

thought alone possessed him; that now he must win the match and the money. The conditions of the game distinctly stated that, should the figure make no move, the victory went to its opponent.

He gathered up his victim's hat, and the false beard, from where they lay on the ground, and stuffing the dripping hair into the hat, flung it out over the river. Then he turned and walked quickly towards the theatre.

Mr. Greet and Monsieur Roulain arrived at the theatre a few minutes only before the time appointed for the match. Roulain unlocked the door of the Green Room, which had been reserved for their private use, and they went in to find the Automaton ready seated in its chair. They both con-

cluded at once that Mr. Murray, as was his habit, had arrived earlier and was already concealed within the figure. Roulain contented himself with opening the outer panels, in order to make sure that his invention of mirrors revealed nothing to the public but the accustomed mass of machinery. When he was satisfied he rapped twice upon the back of the figure, and after a few seconds an answering knock came back to him. It was the signal he had arranged with Mr. Murray. Then, summoning two attendants, he had the Automaton wheeled on to the stage. Directly afterwards the curtain was raised, discovering to the audience, that thronged every corner of the house, the solitary figure of the Automaton in its chair. Mr. Greet stepped forward to its side, his comfortable figure resplendent in an evening suit that glittered with jewels, and after bowing unctuously in response to the plaudits that rang out, made a little speech in which he recapitulated briefly the conditions of the match. He finished with the usual invitation to the audience to come on the stage and examine the figure. This ceremony was quickly disposed of. People throughout the country had come to accept the mystery of the Automaton, and flocked to the performances merely as amateurs of a new sensation, without seeking to further probe the secret. Some score of folks, chiefly of the lower middle class, sought the nearer view that the stage afforded, and after Mr. Greet had courteously delayed the over-inquisitive fingers of a countryman from Clevedon, he retired, to appear again with Mr. Dryden.

Mr. Dryden, whom the action of the storm had reduced to a condition of unhealthy dampness, appeared in a spare suit of Mr. Greet's, which hung upon his angular figure in a succession of unexpected creases and folds. The audience, unprepared for this element of the grotesque, mingled their applause with a ripple of merriment; but Mr. Dryden, in whom the conflicting emotions of triumph and fear waged an incessant battle, was entirely unconscious of any influence outside his own brain. He bowed to the house and cast a look

of surveyal across the floor and round the tiers. In a box that overlapped by some feet on to the stage, sat Mr. Druce, a little hidden by a fold of curtain, the ample contour of his face creased into a twinkle of expectant merriment. Mr. Dryden paid him a mechanical salute and then became conscious of Mr. Greet's voice proffering an introduction to two gentlemen of the press who were to occupy seats upon the stage. He shook hands with the politeness of habit and sat down amid a silence of attention, so great, that the concerted breathing of the audience came upon his ear with a distinct and regular ebb and flow of sound.

The mood of simple curiosity with which former spectators had watched the Automaton's triumphs was on this occasion changed to an intense fervour of interest that threatened in many cases to lapse into hysteria. When on former occasions competitors had climbed the platform, like yokels at a village fair sheepishly certain of defeat from the professional wrestler, the public had speculated pleasantly on the probable duration of the contest, and been content to laugh and wonder at the unusual spectacle. But this was no matter of a lightly-accepted challenge, or of an end which admitted of no serious contemplation. Here were two thousand pounds a side at issue, and the picked chess player of England set down to do battle for fame and fortune against the all-conquering intelligence of the wooden sphinx.

Mr. Dryden sat, his wrists resting lightly upon the edge of the table, gazing intently into the calm features of his lifeless *vis-à-vis*.

The thing was immeasurably unpleasant.

Little attempt had been made to conceive more than the roughest image of man. The forehead sloped backwards, and the long crooked nose that rose above thin tight-set lips and a hard chin had a flavour of the American Indian, while the whole aspect of the morose, seated figure, one arm clasped to the body and one poised forwards with half-bent elbow, conveyed a haunting suggestion of some hawk-faced god of Babylon. A cold sweat came over Mr.

Dryden's brow as his nervous fingers stretched over the chessmen, for he was to make the first move. The full disaster of his affairs was unpleasantly real in his mind, and something burning seemed to press on the back of his eyes. Then the scene on the picture-sheet of his brain shifted to the ferryside, and as he saw again the tide catch the body of Mr. Murray and whirl it out to sea, self-recovery came to him at once. He straightened his arm and advanced a pawn upon the board. As he did so the familiar click of the released mechanism of the stop-watch, brought an aspect of custom, and he sat back in his chair in the tranquil knowledge that the end of the time limit would find the Automaton still motionless, and the wager his. Behind it, at a little distance, sat Greet, in a like comfortable confidence, while the two pressmen, their bodies bent forward, their hands clasped between their knees, brought near to Mr. Dryden the air of intense excitement that hushed the silent hundreds at his side. The stop-watch had marked four minutes when there was a creaking noise in the Automaton. First the shoulder and then the elbow began to move, and to Mr. Dryden's unspeakable horror the pincers of the hand unclasped, and, poised for a moment, clipped the Queen's Pawn and rapidly moved it forwards. The murderer's face grew ashen grey with fear, his eyes blinked rapidly and his heart stood still.

His first thought was that Murray was not, after all, the guiding spirit of the Automaton, that he had killed an inoffensive man for no reason. He heard again the dull sound of breaking bone, and the sucking noise of the rolling body on the mud. He could think of nothing else, till the far-away voice of the umpire, announcing that four minutes had gone, pricked his brain into a little consciousness. He hastily stretched out his hand and made a rapid, unconsidered move. As he did so his fingers came for a brief moment in contact with the iron paw of the Automaton, and at the moment of touching he knew who his adversary was. He felt so strange and terrible a message flash to his brain that his whole body became cold and rigid in a moment.



"MR. GREET NOTICED SOMETHING STRANGE IN MR. DRYDEN'S ATTITUDE"


He could not keep his eyes from the lens-like eyes of his adversary, and he felt rather than saw the intelligence that looked out at him, for he knew he was playing with no earthly opponent.

He made another disastrous and hurried move. Then the head of the Automaton trembled, the lips parted, and it said "Check" loudly and distinctly. The voice was Mr. Murray's voice.

At the end of the five minutes Mr. Greet noticed something strange in Mr. Dryden's attitude. Going hastily up to him, he saw his eyes were wide open but without sight, and when he touched his hand it was cold and stiff. Mr. Dryden was quite dead. The curtain fell, and they carried the body to the green room, while in a terror-stricken silence the vast crowd left the theatre. Their last footsteps were still echoing on the other side of the curtain when Greet and Roulain came back to the stage. The doctors and attendants were trying to restore the body of Mr. Dryden in the little room at the back. Greet opened the panel of the figure and called in hoarse, agitated tones to Mr. Murray to come out. There was no answer, and Roulain fetched a candle and they looked into the hollow in surprise. There was no one there!

Valuable Pets

WRITTEN BY GLENAVON. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

OONER or later most of us fall victims to the fascinations of some kind of hobby, and a hobby, if not over-ridden, is often a source of much pleasure to ourselves and perhaps to others also. At the present time live-stock hobbies are the fashion. Keeping valuable pets, breeding and exhibiting pedigree cats, dogs, cattle or canaries, as the case may be, has become much more general than formerly, and many ladies devote a considerable amount of time and money to the cult of some particular creature, which they endeavour by dint of careful selection of stock to bring to a state bordering on perfection. To possess what is termed "a flyer" is the darling ambition of many a feminine soul.

And, from the point of view of a genuine lover of animals, this tendency on the part of our society leaders to take up some particular "fancy" must be regarded with favour, for undoubtedly it will do much to ameliorate the lot of many a so-called pet by the introduction of a commendable spirit of emulation amongst owners.

Contrast, for instance, the fate of some poor canary imprisoned in a tiny, dirty cage—kept "to amuse the children," and actually dying by inches from neglect or ignorance, or both—with the pet of a fancier. While the former is hung up in a draught, with a drop of stagnant water to relieve its thirst, and for food a meagre supply of stale "mixed" seeds, half of which are positively injurious to its constitution, the slim bright-plumaged bird of the man who means to win first and special at the next local show, is well cared for; it enjoys the luxury of a daily bath, a wholesome and liberal

diet of properly selected seeds, varied by plenty of lettuce, water-cress, ground-sel and fruit. The owner of this canary has taken the trouble to read up the subject of cage-birds, with the result that his favourite leads a happy, because healthy, existence, and is moreover a source of profit to him. Many a well-known fancier of poultry, cats, or canaries belongs to the working class, and has taken up a live-stock hobby by way of amusement in his leisure hours. And there is so much chance about breeding that sometimes a winner is produced from parents whose cost has been but trifling. I was told that a certain successful cat-fancier in Bath purchased his first Tom for the ridiculous sum of two shillings; so there is hope for all. On the other hand, very large sums of money have been paid for furred and feathered favourites; £70 was given, I believe, for a famous Norwich crested canary, "King of Champions," and Dr. Martin paid £40 for "Prince of Wales," another crested bird. £20 has actually been refused for a canary only four months old! It is, perhaps, needless to add that these are merely fancy prices; one might purchase a perfect canary for £5. Exorbitant prices are the result of keen professional rivalry.

"Taking one consideration with another," a pussy's life, like that of the policeman in the song, is "not a very happy one" as a rule. Tormented by boys, chased by dogs, neglected by its owner, many a poor cat comes at last to a miserable end. The wanton cruelty of leaving puss to starve when the family goes out of town after the season is only one example of the kind of treatment our "movable mousetraps" receive at the hands of people who presumably

consider themselves *human* beings. The organisation of cat shows at the Palace and elsewhere, and Lady Marcus Beresford's Cat Club, must surely have accomplished something on pussy's behalf, if only by showing to cat-owners the latent possibilities of their pets.

Some five-and-twenty years ago, when cat shows were in their infancy and when pedigree pussies were comparatively rare, Mrs. Drummond, of Weston, Bath, began to breed Persians, and her "Silver Prince" and "Silver Princess" were the progenitors of many a prizewinner. Mrs. Drummond (now Mrs. Frost) still lives in Bath, but she rarely shows her pets. Silver tabbies are in great request and fetch good prices. Several of Mrs. Frost's kittens, after changing hands, have distinguished themselves on the show bench. "Corridor Tom," a Bath celebrity, deserves to be introduced to the readers of this magazine. He was—for, alas! he has joined the majority—a very popular character. He belonged to Mrs. Overton, who for many years had a toy-shop in the Corridor. "Tom" was a huge tabby, very handsomely marked and extremely dignified in appearance. His favourite seat was the back of a big rocking-horse, from which point of vantage he solemnly regarded the entrance and exit of the customers. Children were more delighted with the "real pussy" than with the tempting array of playthings around, and as may be imagined he received enough admiration to turn the head of any cat. Mrs. Overton refused an offer of £10 10s. for her pet, which now lies buried in the pretty garden of his mistress's private residence. "Corridor Tom" is by no means forgotten, though he has now been dead many years. Dozens of his portraits have been sold, and people revisiting Bath often call at the shop (now Barleys') to enquire for their old friend, and are grieved to hear of his demise.

All live-stock keepers are agreed in the opinion that pets require light, air, space, exercise, perfect cleanliness and proper feeding, if they are to be healthy and beautiful. No one should keep creatures unless they are prepared to treat them kindly.



From Photo by FREDERICK GREEN

I don't know of any better cared for animals than those belonging to Miss Acton, an only daughter, who lives with her father at Limpley Stoke—one of the prettiest spots on the Somersetshire Avon. Miss Acton has an existence which would appear idyllic to most girls. She has pets galore, from a handsome high-mettled hunter called "King Tom," down to Belgian hares and poultry. Belgian hares are very fashionable pets just now, and £25 is not considered an out-of-the-way price for a good buck. Miss Acton has for some years been a breeder, and occasionally an exhibitor of old English bob-tailed sheep-dogs. The one whose portrait has been taken with her mistress in the accompanying photo is "Nellie Grey"; she is a perfect beauty, and though shown only five times has gained six firsts, a championship, a premiership, and many special prizes. There are several other sheep-dogs, of which my own particular chum is "Lady Hearts-

ease," who has the gentlest and most affectionate manners imaginable, and is of that blue merle colour which is so much admired. Two of these dogs always accompany Miss Acton to church, waiting patiently outside till the end of the service. Her latest triumph has been the hand-rearing of two piglets, which, the litter being unusually large, were to have been destroyed. Day and night they were fed every hour with warm milk out of a

attacked Miss Acton's dogs, and though she sat up for ten nights with her favourites, and had two veterinary surgeons in attendance, only one of the six patients survived, and she estimates her monetary loss at £50.

Some of the finest deerhounds in England belong to Mrs. Davis, "Champion Wulphilda," whose portrait is given, is a grand animal and was bred at Winsley, where until quite recently Major and Mrs. Davis resided.



MISS ACTON AND SELLIE GREY

From Photo by LAMBERT & LAMBERT

baby's bottle. Eventually they grew quite fat and were sold for eleven shillings apiece. Miss Acton lives close to the river, and keeps a boat called the "Peppermint," in which she constantly takes expeditions, with the dogs racing along the banks beside her. Not long ago a terrible epidemic of distemper, which was raging in the neighbourhood,

They are both devoted to their big pets, which, however, are extremely well-mannered and accustomed to be in the house. As many as three of these fine dogs make their appearance at afternoon tea, and visitors are always delighted with them. "Wulphilda" is an excellent example of what is most popular on the show bench to-day. Deerhounds are



"CHAMPION WULPHILDA"

From Photo by LAMBERT & LAMBERT

so very dignified in appearance that one inevitably pictures them as lying before the wide hearth-place of a baronial hall, or pacing the terraced walks of my lady's garden, so it is irresistibly mirth-provoking to see one of Mrs. Davis's pets sitting in a rather small armchair, in which cramped position the long-limbed creature looks very grotesque.

Another lady who has been devoted to pets from her babyhood, and is well able to indulge in her various live-stock hobbies is Mrs. Hebe Carthew, of Vastern Manor, Wootton Bassett, Wilts. Her portrait is here reproduced, and that of her favourite hunter, "Tally-ho," a beautiful mare for which she has refused 300 guineas. Mrs. Carthew belongs to a family (the Bedwells) who for generations have been associated with all forms of outdoor sport. When only three years old she was mounted on a big hunter called "Kitty." When ten years old she was given a horse of her own, which was afterwards well known in many a hard-run field as "Beeswing." At twelve she made her debut as a dog-owner, having purchased with her own pocket money the Irish terrier registered as "Rugby Vic." Deerhounds and Dalmatians are the

breeds most favoured by Mrs. Carthew at the present time, and she has been very successful with both. A visit to the stables and kennels at Vastern is a great treat to any one who loves animals. I went over there in July, and saw amongst other favourites a beautiful silver roan hackney called "Cigarette," and her foal "Queen Bee." Anything more entirely fascinating than the latter at the age of six months it would be difficult to imagine. These beautiful pets have Arab blood in them, "Cigarette's" sire, "Sunshine," is still being used as a polo pony in India, though seventeen years of age!

Mrs. Oliphant, of Chatley House, Norton St. Philip, makes bloodhounds her speciality, but she has also some good bull-dogs. No doubt one re-

quires to be educated up to bull-dogs: personally I admire them immensely. There is no pleasanter way of spending an afternoon than being taken by Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant on a tour of inspection to the stables, kennels and farmyard at Chatley, where, besides horses and dogs, a herd of Jersey cattle, poultry, pigeons, and ducks are each and all worthy of notice. Some of my readers may remember that at the bloodhound trials, at Ravenscar, in the autumn of 1898, which attracted so much attention in sporting circles, Mrs. Oliphant's two dogs, "Chatley Regent" and "Chatley Consort," won the "brace stakes," and the former won also "single hounds free," thus gaining two out of three prizes offered. Mrs. Oliphant has issued an open challenge to match two of her puppies in a similar contest with any other hounds in England, but the challenge has not been taken up.

Man-hunting trials are extremely interesting to all sportsmen and sportswomen. The method is as follows: A man is sent across country (often he is a perfect stranger to the hounds); when the scent is from two to five hours old, as the case may be, one hound (or more) is set on to the trail, and eventually tracks him to his hiding place. Inasmuch as these

contests bring out the sagacity of the hounds, without even the sacrifice of an unfortunate fox, they appeal to many persons who have but little sympathy with sport as a rule.

Of course, to bring hounds into such perfect working order as "Chatley Regent" and his kennel companions, involves a very great deal of care in training. Mrs. Oliphant's puppies are

tures, with their serious, not to say melancholy expression, and their wrinkled brows. They are quite the reverse of ferocious, allowing visitors to pet them (at all events when their mistress is at hand to vouch for the stranger's respectability). They are very fond of Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant and also of the keeper. When they track the latter, he generally rewards them by



MRS. HEDE CARTEW ON HER FAVOURITE HUNTER "TALLY-HO"

From Photo by H. WILKINSON

sent out, of course, with older hounds, at the early age of four months, to learn their work. Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant spend much of their time with these animals, sometimes taking all the bloodhounds out (and at the present time there are twenty-four of them) before breakfast. They are very swift; in fact the horses are generally more tired than they after the morning run. There is something very attractive about these crea-

a piece of biscuit from his pocket, "just to show there is no ill-feeling."

A bloodhound pup is worth from £7. 7s. to £12. 12s., and Mrs. Oliphant has but little difficulty in disposing of her surplus stock. Mrs. Oliphant's little daughter, aged six, knows no fear of anything on the place; she has a spaniel of her own, which has been her constant and faithful companion ever since she was in long clothes, when the

dog took a most extraordinary liking to her. The Jersey cattle owned by Mr. and Mrs. Oliphant are not exhibited ; but I had the pleasure of seeing two very beautiful Jersey cows at Glynde, Sussex, not long ago, which belong to Admiral the Honourable T. S. Brand.

"Joyful Girl" was imported from the island; she took £35 in prize money and a gold cup, value £10, for her owner in one day at Tring Park, and another very valuable cow, called "Rose of Sharon," has been exhibited twelve times, and has gained no less than fifteen prizes, including the Blythwood Bowl ; so that

even the useful dairy cow may become not only a thing of beauty but also a cherished pet.

Many ladies own and exhibit Jersey and other kinds of cattle, and after a time often become experienced judges of stock. That women should take an intelligent interest in the welfare of all animals is most desirable, but any tendency to adopt "horsey" dress and manners should be sternly repressed. Knowledge has indeed been dearly bought if in its acquisition one jot or tittle of a woman's innate refinement and grace has been lost.



TO A LADY, WITH A PRESENT OF FLOWERS

(TWO SONNETS FROM RONSARD)

I.

WHEN old, by tapers' flare and faggots' glow
You'll hum my rhymes at evening as you wind
The wool, and, marvelling, call old times to mind,
Saying, "Ronsard sang my beauty long ago."
Then all your maidens, as they sit and sew,
Drowsing or wrangling o'er each task assigned,
Hearing my name, in whispers low and kind
Will deathless praises on your name bestow.

Then where the myrtles rustle I'll sleep forlorn,
A shade, from laughter and love deep hidden away,
While you, crouched o'er the fire, peaked, wizened and grey,
Bewail the hour you met my love with scorn.
Trust me, nor tarry till to-morrow morn,
But garner up life's roses from to-day.

II.

To you I send a posy wov'n of flowers
New-blown, by mine own fingers chos'n with care.
At evensong I culled them, lest the air
Of early morn should slay them in their bowers.
Learn thence how short the lapse of adverse hours
Ere you, however young, however fair,
Must view your charms, as buds the wind lays bare,
Scared by the frosts of age, life's storms and showers.

For time flits ever, swallow-like, and leaves us
Scant space for love. Nay! time lags, we—we go;
A little while, and then the grave receives us.
And once we're dead and buried, none may know
More of this love which gladdens us, yet grieves us;
Then, young andauteous, love me while you're so.



THE L. & N. W. RY. CO.'S STEAMER WHICH CONVEYED MR. TREE'S COMPANY BETWEEN HOLYHEAD AND DUBLIN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RECORD TRIP FROM BALMORAL TO THE IRISH CAPITAL

How Theatrical Companies Travel

WRITTEN BY D. T. TIMINS. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



THE man who is sinful enough to break the Sabbath by expending a penny upon the *Referee* will find in that paper a column headed "On the Road." The contents thereof will most probably strike him at first sight as being uninteresting, for they are nothing more nor less than a list of journeys to be made on the day in question by various theatrical touring companies, together with a record of the

trains, special or otherwise, by which these companies propose to travel.

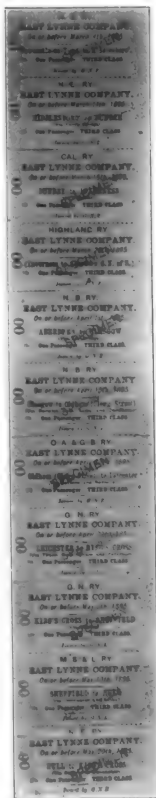
But of the stupendous amount of work involved in the arrangement of their journeys, and of the importance of theatrical traffic from a railway point of view, he has probably no idea.

Naturally those actors and actresses who play more or less regularly at the great London theatres are especially "in the public eye," but they represent a very small section of "the profession."

The great bulk of players are members of various touring companies, ranging in importance from "the original London Company, with full scenery and effects, from the Frivolity Theatre," down to the humble little "fit-up" troupe consisting of five or six players, who will give a tragedy, a farce, and a comic opera all at the same performance.

It must be stated at the outset that at least 99 percent of theatrical touring companies travel every Sunday during the whole of their tour. Let us suppose that we have booked dates at a series of provincial theatres for the appearance of the company we have engaged to tour with that "gigantic London success" entitled "Till the Crack of Doom."

Of course, we have tried to so arrange matters that the various towns we visit shall come in regular geographical order, but it is by no means possible to do so in every case. Be that as it may, we hand in a list of the places we propose to visit to the theatrical traffic manager of the line we elect to honour with our patronage. That gentleman will arrange for all the journeys, both over his own and other companies' lines, issue a specially printed set of tickets which will embrace the whole of the tour from start to finish, and quote the average fare to be paid weekly. This fare will be at the rate of three-fourths of the sum payable by ordinary travellers, provided our troupe consists of not less than ten persons, whilst each member of it will be allowed to take 1½ cwt. of luggage free of charge. (The same privileges are extended to music-hall artistes travelling in parties of not less than five between two given points.) If we are either a very important or a very numerous company, the theatrical traffic manager will arrange for us to retain the use of one special train throughout the whole of our tour. *A propos* of the foregoing it may be remarked that certain actors invariably travel by certain lines. For instance, Sir Henry Irving always journeys with his company by the London and North-Western; George Alexander by the Midland; and so on. Companies of this class are provided with special trains, which usually consist of a drawing-room, saloon and sleeping car for the use of the principals, and



SET OF TICKETS

a family saloon for the other members of the company. Sarah Bernhardt—who gives a good deal of trouble, but

pays well for doing so—is furnished by the Midland Company with a specially fitted up series of cars called the “Palace Car Train,” in the composition of which the Prince of Wales’s saloons are used.

Sir Henry Irving’s company is one of the largest of the touring combinations, numbering usually ninety persons, whilst he requires eleven trucks for the conveyance of his scenery. Among other very large troupes may be mentioned the Carl Rosa Opera Company, who travel 100 strong; the Royal Italian Opera Company of 132 artists; and the Moody-Manners Opera Company, which consists of 80 performers. The largest company ever conveyed by rail was, however, the one engaged for the production of Oscar Barrett’s “Cinderella” pantomime, at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross. The entire troupe, consisting of 144 actors and actresses, was transported to Hull in two special trains, seventeen truck-loads of scenery and dresses being also carried.

In former days theatrical companies were only allowed to travel by slow trains, and neither sleeping nor dining cars were ever provided for them. *Mais nous avons changé tout cela.* Fast special expresses, offering the most luxurious accommodation, are now the rule rather than the exception where the votaries of Thespis are concerned. In cases in which the journey is a long one, and it is not practicable to run a dining car, the railway company always arrange through their Hotel Department for the special opening of the refreshment rooms at suitable points *en route*. Which fact is reminiscent of a dog story.

During the stoppage of a theatrical special in Peterborough Station, an actor descended therefrom and proceeded to the buffet, accompanied by his dog. When “Take your seats, gentlemen, please!” resounded along the platform, Ponto was nowhere to be found, and after making a thorough search, thereby greatly delaying the train, his owner was compelled to go on without him. Just as the train was leaving the station, however, the dog appeared, and rushed off down the line in pursuit of the fast-disappearing carriages. His master saw him, and

upon reaching King’s Cross immediately caused the following advertisement to be printed and circulated:—

“£1 REWARD!

“LOST!

“A black and white fox terrier in or near Peterborough Station (G.N.R.). Last seen following the 5.15 p.m. Great Northern train to London.” (!)

It is satisfactory to know that the actor safely recovered his pet next day.

The conveyance of touring companies is now an exceedingly important item in the railway traffic returns. In arranging the working time table the railway companies endeavour as far as possible to utilise their ordinary service for the theatrical traffic—indeed the new Sunday express trains to the North, which are regularly run by the North-Western, Midland, Great Northern, and Great Eastern Companies, are an outcome of their efforts in this direction. But it is quite impossible to provide sufficient accommodation without introducing special trains, and the number of the latter has increased enormously of late years. Taking an average Sunday in the busy season, *i.e.*, between the August Bank Holiday and the second week in December, we find that the Great Northern now convey from 50 to 60 companies over various parts of their system in from twenty to twenty-five special trains, figures which show an increase of 40 per cent. over those for a similar Sunday in 1890. Again, upon the London and North-Western Railway the theatrical traffic has more than quadrupled itself since 1892, an average of 114 companies now travelling every Sunday in thirty-six trains. In 1897 they carried 60,000 theatrical passengers and 2,000 truck-loads of scenery, exclusive of horse boxes. The Midland, too, are called upon to provide accommodation upon the same day for from 60 to 65 troupes of mummers, requiring from twenty-four to twenty-seven trains for their conveyance, and can boast of an increase in their theatrical traffic of 50 per cent. in the last two years. The “record” of the last-named company for a single Sunday stands at thirty-two

trains, which transported no fewer than 40 different companies.

The Southern companies, by reason of the comparative smallness of their respective systems, cannot hope to rival the above figures; but nevertheless, the London and South-Western Railway find it necessary to provide accommodation for from 25 to 26 companies every Sunday, as against for from 5 to 6 on the same day ten years ago. Upon a recent Sunday the 11

busiest "exchange" stations for theatrical traffic. It is not at all an uncommon thing to see as many as from 14 to 20 companies, all bound for different destinations, in either of these stations simultaneously. Many are the unexpected meetings, the renewals of former friendships, and the partings for aye which take place all unexpectedly at junction stations every Sunday.

The railway companies find it necessary to employ a special depart-



INTERIOR OF G. N. R. FIRST CLASS DINING CAR USED BY SOME THEATRICAL COMPANIES FOR JOURNEYS TO AND FROM SCOTLAND

a.m. train ex Waterloo, due into Exeter at 5.30 p.m., consisted of 22 coaches, 7 trucks of baggage, and 12 horse boxes. Besides ordinary passengers, 160 actors and actresses travelled by it, belonging respectively to Ben Greet's "Sign of the Cross" Company, "The Prisoner of Zenda" Company, Bateman's "From Scotland Yard" Company, and Arundel's Circus Troupe.

Crewe and Derby are by far the

mental traffic manager, with a staff of clerks under him (whose office is attached to that of the superintendent of the line), in order to deal satisfactorily with the theatrical traffic.

And most admirably are all the arrangements carried out, though the journeys performed by some troupes are calculated to turn the hair of the most hardened railway official white in a single night. For instance, Miss Fortescue's Company made the follow-

ing nice little trips, amongst many others.

Consecutive Journeys { Jersey to Douglas (Isle of Man).
Douglas to Folkestone (via Liverpool), not leaving Douglas until Monday morning and performing in Folkestone the same night.

Clacton to Llandudno.
Southampton to Liverpool (via Waterloo.)
Plymouth to Aberdeen.

Amongst other examples of long and difficult journeys may be cited those of the "Tom, Dick and Harry" Company, from Whitehaven to Folkestone, and from Eastbourne to Cork; of Mr. E. Lockwood's "La Poupée" Company, from Ramsgate to Jersey; and of Mr. George Edwardes' "Circus Girl" Company, from Cork to Bristol. The last does not sound a very long trip, but as there are no boats between Cork and Milford on Saturday or Sunday nights, the company were compelled to travel from Cork to Dublin, to cross from Dublin to Holyhead, and then to proceed to their destination via Crewe, Hereford, and the Severn Tunnel!

Small wonder is it that upon journeys as complicated as the above a truck-load of scenery should now and again go astray, and that the "Guilty Glue Pot" Tragedy Company should find to their dismay that they have exchanged their own scenery and wardrobe for that of the "Miss Park Paling's" Musical Comedy Company. But there are astonishingly few instances of anything of the kind actually happening, though perhaps one or two of those few are worth relating.

When Miss Ida Millar's "No Man's Land" Company was travelling from Exeter to Liverpool, a truck loaded with scenery went wickedly astray and turned up at Ipswich, of all places. It was with the utmost difficulty, and only by dint of frantic wiring and superhuman exertions on the part of the Railway Company, that the truant finally arrived at Liverpool in time for the opening performance.

George Edwardes' No. 1 "Circus

Girl" Company also had an unpleasant experience. They were travelling one Sunday by the 10 p.m. express from London to Edinburgh. Just north of Lancaster the discovery was made that one of the trucks of scenery had by some means or another caught fire. The train was obliged to run for another two miles before water could be obtained, and by that time the contents of the truck were completely incinerated. The manager of the No. 1 Company immediately wired to London, directing the scenery of the No. 2 Company (which fortunately had not yet left town) to be forwarded at once. It was duly despatched by the 5.15 a.m. newspaper train from Euston on the Monday morning, and reached Edinburgh at 3.5 p.m. the same afternoon. By dint of tremendous labour, the stage carpenters were just able to set it in time for the ringing up of the curtain.

A mishap no less awkward overtook John Douglas' "Dark Secret" Company whilst *en route* one Christmas Eve from Gateshead to Jersey. During the run between London and Southampton the glass tank used in the famous water scene was damaged. The mischief was not discovered until the company had arrived in Jersey, and the repairs were only completed within *ten minutes* of the time advertised for the commencement of the performance.

The members of the "Night Out" Company had a very narrow escape upon March 6th last. They were travelling from Exeter to Plymouth, and when nearing Tavistock the train suddenly left the metals, owing to some obstruction having been placed upon the line. Both driver and fireman courageously stuck to their posts and succeeded in bringing the train to a standstill. In spite of the fact that there were people in the carriage next to the engine, no one was seriously hurt, and the passengers presented testimonials to both driver and fireman, in recognition of their bravery.

As may well be supposed, theatrical touring has its humorous as well as its tragic side. Perhaps the following anecdote is one of the best of the many good stories told of adventures which have befallen actors whilst on their travels.

At a certain station a newly appointed

and zealous ticket collector compelled an actor to pay excess fare because the latter had not taken a ticket for a small and very fluffy dog, which was accompanying him on his travels. The Thespian straightway swore to be avenged, and he had not long to wait for his opportunity. It so happened that the next time he travelled over that line it was in the company of a well-known ventriloquist. They provided themselves with a stuffed dog's head, and as the train slowed up at the ticket-taking station, the actor held the head out of the window whilst the ventriloquist caused it seemingly to bark loudly. The head was then withdrawn and quietly disposed of in a great-coat pocket.

When the collector reached the compartment in which the two conspirators were seated, he immediately demanded a dog-ticket, and was met by a polite query as to why such a thing was necessary, seeing that there was no member of the canine species present. A heated argument ensued, which ended in much taking of names and addresses, and a delay to the train of twenty-five minutes. However, the real facts of the case leaked out somehow and the railway company, wisely decided to let the matter drop.

And now one word as to the speed at which theatrical specials travel. They have accomplished some of the smartest runs recorded in railway history, a state of affairs for which the fashion of giving "flying matinées" of London successes in provincial towns, during the actual metropolitan run of the pieces, is to a great extent responsible. The one thing that made this possible was the introduction of dining-cars, though the "flying matinée" is fast dying out of fashion, doubtless owing to the increased number of provincial theatres now in existence. The biggest thing of the kind ever attempted was the conveyance of Messrs. Morrell & Mouillot's "A Woman's Reason" Company (which included Mrs. Tree and Lewis Waller) from Euston to Manchester for a matinée in the latter city, and back again in time for the evening performance in town. Whilst travelling to Manchester the company "made-up" in the train. The return

trip of 183½ miles was accomplished in four hours, by a special train consisting of a dining-car, a drawing-room car and two brake thirds. The inclusive speed on the up journey was 45·8 miles per hour.

Arthur Bouchier was the most indefatigable of the "matinateurs." During the run of the "Chili Widow" in London, he gave afternoon performances of that play in Birmingham, Portsmouth, and Bournemouth, amongst other towns. From the last-named place the return journey of 108 miles was accomplished in 2 hours 8 minutes, inclusive of a stop at Pokedown. This time was, however, equalled by the train which conveyed Charles Hawtrey's Company upon the occasion of his giving a flying matinée at the same place during the London run of "The Saucy Sally."

The Midland once did a very smart piece of work by bringing Richter's Orchestra from Liverpool (Central) to London (St. Pancras), a distance of 220½ miles in 4 hours 35 minutes. The train left Liverpool at 6.30 p.m. and steamed into St. Pancras at 11.5 p.m. When the difficult nature of the road is taken into consideration, this feat must be given a prominent position in the records of smart railway work.

Nor have the Great Northern been behindhand in furnishing examples of quick running with heavy loads. Upon the occasion of the opening of the new theatre at Cambridge, Beerbohm Tree's Company gave the first performance therein, travelling from King's Cross by the ordinary service and returning by a special with dining-cars attached. This was an exceedingly heavy train, but nevertheless left Cambridge at 5.15 p.m. and made the run of 58 miles to King's Cross in 1 hour 15 minutes, in spite of the great reduction in speed necessary whilst approaching and passing Hitchin.

But perhaps the palm for feats of this description must be awarded to the London & North-Western. It happened thus. Beerbohm Tree, having arranged to open in Dublin on a certain date, which had been booked of course several months in advance, found himself suddenly called upon to give a "command" performance at Balmoral, upon the night preceding the one

chosen by him for his first appearance in the Irish capital. He was very loth to disappoint his Dublin audience, and instructed his manager to find out if it would not be possible to reach the Emerald Isle by some means or other in time to ring up the curtain at the advertised hour. The "command" performance was to take place on a Monday, and Mr. Tree was due in Dublin the next day. His manager wired the North-Western Company's theatrical traffic agent at 9.30 a.m. on

to make a start. Even then the loading of one of the trucks with scenery and dresses was not completed, and this vehicle was obliged to follow later, picking up the special at Aberdeen. The train arrived in Aberdeen 1 hour and 28 minutes late, and was there further delayed by the necessary shunting operations. In spite of every effort being made by the railway officials it was 4.8 p.m. on Tuesday afternoon before the special steamed into Holyhead, and it looked well-nigh



PICNIC SALOON (INTERIOR) L. & N. W. RY. CO.

Saturday to know whether the matter could possibly be arranged, and received a reply at midnight to the effect that the railway company would undertake to land Mr. Tree in Dublin at the required time.

It was accordingly arranged for a special train to leave Ballater for Holyhead at 12.55 midnight, but the members of Tree's Company were detained at Balmoral for supper until long after 1.0 a.m., and it was not until 3.5 a.m. that the special was able

impossible for the company to reach Dublin in time. (It must be borne in mind that this was before the advent of the new mail steamers.) A special boat was in readiness, and every member of the company turned to and worked like a Trojan in assisting the porters to transfer the baggage and scenery from the train to the steamer. So quickly was this done that, incredible though it sounds, the vessel was actually under way by 4.15. Up to this point all the

actors and actresses had been compelled to travel in their evening clothes, having had no place in which to change them since leaving Balmoral.

The steamer reached Dublin (North Wall) at 8.15 p.m. English time, which is 7.50 p.m. Irish time, the company drove straight to the theatre, and the curtain was rung up punctually at 8.30.

Among other quick journeys worth recording may be noted one made by the "La Poupée" Company from Ramsgate to Southampton via Waterloo Junction (S.E.R.) and Waterloo (L. & S.W.R.), 164 miles. Ramsgate, depart 7 p.m. Southampton, arrive 11.15 p.m.

Another fast piece of travelling was accomplished by Lancaster's "Private Secretary" Company. They left Guernsey by the ordinary 10 a.m. boat and began the performance in Bournemouth at 7 p.m. the same evening.

But if theatrical touring is hard work for the popular actor or actress in the receipt of a high salary and able to command every luxury and comfort whilst travelling, what must it be for the members of the humble little "fit-up" companies who visit the smaller towns and villages and play opera, comedy, tragedy, or anything else you like to name, to 1s. 6d. stalls? There is a world of pathos in the story told to us by a theatrical traffic manager when questioned as to the smallest company for which he had ever been called upon to arrange a tour. "They were a party of seven," he said. "They travelled from London to Blyth, Blyth to Merthyr, Merthyr to Uttoxeter, and then vanished! Their average fare only amounted to 30s. There are hundreds of such companies, and their members personate lords, ladies and millionaires on the stage, whilst they themselves in private life are often in want of food!"

We cannot conclude this article without some mention of the theatrical traffic manager himself, for his life is a very arduous one, and his duties and responsibilities are very heavy. Each week's work is complete in itself, and between Monday and Saturday he must arrange for the whole of the next Sunday's traffic. Very frequently he does not know exactly what accommodation he will be called upon to provide on any

given Sunday until the preceding Saturday morning, by reason of some companies not communicating their requirements until the last moment, or unexpectedly altering their plans. Then he must dovetail all the various journeys into each other so that the number of special trains is minimised, and those running in the ordinary service utilised as far as possible. He must, moreover, be ever on the watch for new companies or for companies whose movements are uncertain, in order that he may try and secure their patronage for the railway he represents. A very curious feature of theatrical traffic work is the enormous extent to which personal feeling enters into the matter. Actors notoriously blend their social and their business lives, and a theatrical manager in making a contract for the conveyance of his company during a tour is not so much concerned with the fact that a given railway offers him the shortest route, as with the personality of those members of its staff with whom he comes into contact. A theatrical traffic manager must be a resourceful, tactful and courteous man, as well as of strong character to resist the well meant but overwhelming hospitality which members of the dramatic profession are ever ready to extend to their friends. Moreover, he is obliged to travel about a great deal and to journey with any company who are making at all a difficult or a complicated trip, and this means that he spends quite half of his life in trains. He often works from 9 a.m. till 12 midnight, for he is unable to see many of his clients until after the theatres have closed.

The theatrical traffic manager often proves himself to be a man of many parts. One of these gentlemen, being possessed of a good ear, recently helped an unmusical manager to select a chorus! Upon another occasion the same gentleman made an involuntary appearance on the boards. It happened in this wise. Just before the performance commenced our friend was standing upon the stage, talking to the stage manager, when the curtain suddenly rose and they found themselves unwilling members of a street crowd, which rushed on for the opening scene!



AN ECCENTRIC WILL

FRANK WRIGHT.

WRITTEN BY HELEN BODDINGTON. ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK WRIGHT

CHAPTER I.

I CONFESS I can't quite see why his name should be mentioned in connection with mine; I don't even know the man by sight, so that it is hardly likely I should wish to marry him," and Eleanor Monteith frowned and looked decidedly puzzled.

"And I am afraid I can't give you much enlightenment on the subject; I tried to persuade your uncle against putting the clause in the will, but he was inflexible. You say you have never set eyes on Arthur Drummond to your knowledge, and I don't believe your uncle had either, so that it could not have been a matter of personal dislike. It is certainly the most eccentric will I have ever drawn up," continued the old lawyer, glancing down at the sheet of parchment before him.

"It is more than eccentric," said the girl musingly. "But surely he must have known the man or at least something to his discredit?"

"No, I think not, but he knew his parents, and I fancy we should have to go back some fifty years or more to find the cause of your uncle's strange conduct. In his youth Arthur Drummond's father married the woman who was the intended wife of your uncle. Of course the woman was to blame as well as

Richard Drummond, but your uncle would not see this, and from that time forth the two men were deadly enemies. The Drummond estate is heavily mortgaged, and Sir Arthur Drummond, the only living representative of the family, is practically a poor man. No doubt your uncle knew this, and so, in case of your coming in contact with him, hoped to prevent a union which might possibly be based on mercenary motives. It is a case of visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children."

"And all this belongs to me," said the girl, as she glanced round the well furnished room, and out of the window across the broad expanse of park-like land; "all mine, at least until I marry Sir Arthur Drummond" with a smile, "and then it is mine no more. That is never likely to happen, so it will be mine for ever. It is a great change for me," she continued, and she bent a pair of earnest grey eyes on to the old lawyer, "from comparative poverty to untold wealth. It is a great responsibility, I hope you will help me, Mr. Poppleton."

"My dear young lady, whenever you require me I shall be at your service. But there is one thing in connection with the will that I have not mentioned. Your uncle placed in my hands a codicil, the contents of which are to transpire only in the case of your entering into a

marriage with Sir Arthur Drummond. This document," and he laid his hand on a sealed envelope, "discloses the name of the person to whom the estate and every penny of your uncle's money, which has just come into your possession reverts, in case of your contracting the aforesaid marriage. And now, my dear young lady, it only remains to me to wish you health and a long life to enjoy your good fortune," and so saying, the lawyer shook hands with his client and took his departure.

Eleanor Monteith sank into a chair, an amused smile playing round her lips. "Forbidden to marry a man whom I have never seen! Poor old Uncle, what a strange fad! But I must not complain: you have been good to me, very good, and if this Arthur Drummond should ever cross my path I must not lose my heart to him, that is very certain." She laughed a low, melodious laugh and then, because it sounded strange in that great silent room, her face became grave and troubled, and a mist rose before her eyes.

"I am so lonely, little mother; the riches have come, but you are not here to share them with me, and your love was worth so much more than all these.

CHAPTER II.

"My dear Arthur, it seems to me that the only thing left for you to do is to marry a woman with money."

"Yes, that's the conclusion I've come to, my fair cousin, but where shall I find the woman with money who would care to marry a penniless chap like me? Heigh-ho! this is a weary world," and Arthur Drummond gazed moodily into space, as men have a habit of doing when their thoughts dwell on pecuniary difficulties.

"Oh! come, don't be doleful, Arthur, matters may mend. If you would only be sensible and fall in love with an heiress as I suggest, you would retrieve the family name and the family fortunes and, as the story-books say, live happily ever after."

"I'm too old to fall in love, little 'cous.'; I leave that to the young and foolish."

"Now listen to me, Sir Arthur Drummond, I intend to manage this affair for

you," and the girl, with her merry face and sparkling eyes, came and stood quite near to him so that she might the better gain his attention.

"You know Philip has gone to Scotland shooting, so I've asked an old school-fellow to come and stay with me while he's away."

"I'm surprised that you allowed him to go alone."

"Don't be rude, sir, and kindly remember that I'm quite an old married woman now. But do be serious and listen to me. This old school-fellow of mine a year ago came into a magnificent estate and large fortune."

"Lucky creature!"

"Yes, and she is young and charming, and I believe would just suit you."

"And is the fair damsel to have a say in the matter. They generally do, you know."

"Come in to dinner to-morrow and see her for yourself, and remember that you have the honour of the family to keep up. I can't bear to think of that dear old Drummond Court going to rack and ruin."

"Neither can I," said the man, and his face grew stern. Had not the happiest days of his life been spent there; had not his mother lived and died there?

"But, Arthur, the girl is a great friend of mine, and I will not have you trifle with her. I know your propensity for flirting, but I'll have none of that. You understand?"

"My dear little cousin, you are rather hard on me."

"Not at all, for unless I knew you were a good fellow at heart, I should not attempt to bring you and Eleanor Monteith together."

"You're a born match-maker. But I hope you don't expect me to fall in love with the heiress. I've never been in love in my life, and it is highly improbable that I ever shall."

"Oh! there's plenty of time to think about that; all you've got to do for the present is to remember that at all costs Drummond Court must be saved."

"Yes, you are right; at all costs Drummond Court must be saved."

There was determination in the tone, and once again his face had lost the

careless half-satirical expression it invariably wore.

Kitty Braithwaite watched him. She admired him intensely, this man of the world, with his handsome face and calm indifference of manner, and in her childhood, Drummond Court had been her home, and so was endeared to her.

"To-morrow at six, then," she said as he wished her good-bye.

"Yes, to-morrow at six I meet my fate," he answered jestingly.

CHAPTER III.

"I am expecting my cousin to dinner to-night, so make yourself look nice, Eleanor."

"Is she a very important personage then?"

"My cousin is a man, and a very nice man, too, and I want you to like him because I do."

"What a very good reason, Kit."

"Now don't be sarcastic, and don't put on those high and mighty airs. I should say that you had adopted these

graces with your good fortune, only that I know you were the same at school."

"I'm sorry my manner doesn't please your ladyship."

"Oh! as for that, you dear old Nell, I wouldn't have you one scrap different. But come, its time we were dressing; go and make yourself look pretty."

An hour later, Eleanor Monteith stood before the drawing-room fire, chatting idly to Kitty Braithwaite, who was waiting the arrival of her cousin. Kitty looked at her friend critically, and failed to find one point to offend her observant eye.

She was dressed in a white gown made with exquisite simplicity, which fell in graceful folds round the tall lithe figure. A smile hovered about the mouth and in the grey eyes as she bent them on her companion, while the fire-light shone on her face, showing up the delicate profile and turning the brown coils of hair into ruddy gold.

"He is late," said the little hostess, glancing anxiously at the clock, and then



"THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN, AND SIR ARTHUR DRUMMOND WAS ANNOUNCED"

the door was flung open and Sir Arthur Drummond was announced. Eleanor Monteith started visibly, and cast a swift glance at the new-comer, then she found herself being introduced to him.

She had often wondered if she would ever meet this man whom she was forbidden to marry, and had speculated in a girlish way as to what sort of man he would be. At his entrance she had been startled out of her usual composure, but soon regained it, and presently was talking to him in the grave sweet way natural to her.

"Yes," he thought to himself, "Kit was right, she is beautiful;" and that night Arthur Drummond made up his mind to woo, and if possible, to win this girl, whose wealth would save the honour of his house.

"I hope to see you again," he said to her before going, and then, to Kitty's satisfaction. "I've had a most delightful evening."

And he did see her again many times. He came to dinner, he called in at odd moments, encouraged by the mistress of the house, who gave the two unlimited freedom.

Yes, he was winning his way, there was no doubt of that. He talked to her of his old home, which bye-and-bye, if his fortunes did not change, would pass into other hands; he spoke to her of his mother, and the deep cultured voice became husky. In these and many other ways, he played upon the girl's feelings so that the interest which she had at first felt in him because he was the man she was forbidden to marry, ripened into a great liking and finally into love before she was herself aware of it.

As for the man the game he was playing was a desperate one, and once having entered into it, he would not draw back. He liked the girl, and he had no doubt that if he could persuade her to marry him, they would get on well enough together; further than this he did not analyse his feelings with regard to her. It was the money he wanted, it was the money he must have.

Unwillingly enough Eleanor had grown to care for him, but did he care for her in the same way, or was it that he sought her for her money? Again

and again this thought occurred to her; she knew—she felt—that one day, soon, he would ask her to be his wife, and then she would have the power of testing him, and meanwhile she tried to defer that day, feeling in her secret heart that he would not stand the test.

At last it came, "Eleanor, will you be my wife," he said, and his eyes were filled with admiration as they rested on her standing before him, every inch a princess in her grace and beauty.

He tried to take her hand, but she gently withdrew it, and then he began to tell her how much he thought of her, and how, if she would marry him, he would spend his life in furthering her happiness.

Ah! now for the test! She drew her breath hard and her face became strangely white.

"Wait, do not say any more, I have something to tell you first. It is this," and she fixed her eyes half wistfully on the man's expectant face: "The day I marry you, every penny which I now possess goes from me."

She was still watching him intently, and she could not fail to notice the change in his expression.

"I don't understand," he stammered. "You are joking surely."

Her heart sank lower still; no, he would not stand the test, but she must be strong, she must call her pride to aid her.

"It is no joke. My uncle left his money to me on one condition which was that I should not marry you. In case of my doing this, every penny would immediately go out of my possession. Of course, the will was an eccentric one, and I do not suppose that my Uncle had any personal grudge against you, but believe it was the result of a family feud of long standing."

The voice was monotonous, and she said the words as though she were repeating a difficult lesson.

How beautiful she looked, how unspeakably tender and womanly! Something lying dormant in Arthur Drummond's breast was aroused, but only to be instantly smothered. Drummond Court must be saved at all costs, and he could not do it by marrying a penniless woman.

"I am sorry, but as you probably know, I am a poor man, and I have the family name and the old home to think of, and——"

"Yes, yes, I know all that you would say. I am not worth the sacrifice which you would have to make, and for my part"—and the proud head was held a little higher—"Sir Arthur Drummond's name could not compensate me for the loss of my money."

A mist rose before her eyes, and she put her hand on a chair-back to steady herself. "Good-bye," she said; "there is nothing more to say, and I shall be glad if you will leave me now."

"But, Miss Monteith—Eleanor—I—" And he came nearer, his face working with some strong emotion.

"No, no," she said; "I do not wish to hear any more. Leave me, please, at once."

He walked to the door, turned and looked at her still with that strange expression in his face, and then disappeared.

"Thank God, that is over!" And Eleanor Monteith sank into a chair, and buried her face in her hands.

CHAPTER IV.

"Kitty, I must see her. I can't go on like this any longer. The torture of the last few weeks has been unendurable."

"It's a pity you didn't find out that you cared for her before you left her as you did that day," answered Mrs. Braithwaite, with a frigid air.

"Don't you think I feel that too? But it was only when I knew that I had lost her that I discovered what she was to me. If you knew the remorse I had suffered since, you would take pity on me. Kitty, little cousin," laying his hand appealingly on her shoulder, "for Heaven's sake, let me see her just for a few minutes."

"What good can it do?" said Kitty, half relenting, as she looked at the man's miserable face. "You cannot ask her to marry you, even if she were willing to, which I should think highly improbable. Matters haven't altered in the last few weeks. You still have your old home and the honour of your family to consider," with a touch of sarcasm in her voice.

"These are as nothing to me now," he answered, dejectedly.

Mrs. Braithwaite looked thoughtful. "If that is so, I will send her to you." So saying, she quitted the room.

Arthur Drummond paced restlessly up and down the minutes which followed Kitty's departure, seeming like hours. How would she look? What would she say to him?

At last the door opened, and she entered. She held her head high, but there was not a vestige of colour in her cheeks.

"You wished to speak to me," she said, in a peculiar, calm voice.

"Yes, yes; I want to tell you that I love you. I want to ask your forgiveness. I want—Eleanor, Eleanor, for God's sake, don't turn from me. Don't look at me like that. What can I do to prove to you that I love you? I did not know it myself till I left you that day. I did not know that the one thing in life for which I craved was your love. I have suffered; if you knew how I have suffered, you would have pity."

"What of the old home and the family name?" said the calm voice.

"They are nothing—nothing to me now. It is your love, only your love I want, Eleanor, my darling. I would give up all, everything in the wide world to gain that," he said, passionately.

Her face was growing softer; the expression in her eyes had changed. "Do you remember that I shall not have one penny to call my own?"

"I don't know how to make you believe it," he said, in a hopeless tone. "It is not your money I want; it is yourself. I have tried to keep away from you because I felt that you would spurn me. I longed to come to you, but I dreaded to see hatred for me in your face. You have every right to despise me. I know I have erred past forgiveness." And he covered his face with his hands.

So, thank God, he had stood the test after all!

She went near to him, and laid one hand gently on his shoulder. "If the sacrifice is not too great for you to make, neither is it for me, because—because—I love you."



"SHE WENT NEAR TO HIM, AND LAID ONE HAND GENTLY ON HIS SHOULDER."

Then his arms were round her, and everything was forgotten, save that it was so.

* * *

The day on which Sir Arthur Drummond and Eleanor Monteith were married, old Mr. Poppleton, the lawyer, appeared on the scene, bringing with him the codicil of William Monteith's will, in which was the name of the lucky individual to whom Eleanor's money was to be transferred.

In the library of Kitty Braithwaite's house, after the marriage ceremony, the sealed packet was opened and read;

and, to the surprise of all present, the name which appeared in the codicil was that of Arthur Drummond.

The bridegroom looked at the bride in bewilderment. "What does it mean? I do not understand, dear. Why should I have your money?"

"Your wife's uncle left his property in this way, sir, knowing that if ever you did marry his niece it would be for herself and not for her fortune; or, as he says" (continued the old lawyer, referring to the parchment), "'By this means will be proved the sincere attachment between Eleanor Monteith and Arthur Drummond.'"

Bygone Bloomsbury

WRITTEN BY A. WALLIS MYERS

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

WE cannot look," says Carlyle, "however imperfectly, upon a great man without gaining something by him"; and this remains a truism even when that "great man" is dead and buried, it may be for many years. Not only are the pages of biographical teaching open to the minds of those who would have "the light which enlightens," but in and around this great city of London there are landmarks which, if only as an index to the memory of the illustrious men who lived hard by, are worthy of close attention.

The study of topography is a never-failing theme of interest to those whose minds are not eternally saturated with the commonplace, and go in what direction one will in this great metropolis of the world—the social West, the respectable and villa-packed North, the still greater condensed South, or the plebeian East—historic associations abound. No square, district, or open space can be safely said to be devoid of the glamour which essentially attaches itself to a great name. It is to be regretted that so few of these relics of the past have been preserved, and that even when one does light upon something avowedly associated with the "great departed," one is constrained to be a little dubious as to its actual genuineness.

A stranger to London, walking through Bloomsbury for the first time, would undoubtedly and justifiably murmur: "What an uninteresting place; how those commercial signs offering 'Board and Residence' stare one in the face; what an inartistic collection of streets, all

more or less suggestive of the economical lodger and the Scrooge-like landlord; and what an aggravating monotony about even the very doorposts!" It would be but an accurate diagnosis of a very useful neighbourhood; yet Bloomsbury can give points to many another more beautiful locality in the matter of the historical tale it can tell. True, in obedience to the inflexible hand of the up-to-date builder, its whole exterior has been modernised, until the shade of Beaconsfield, who lived some time at No. 6, Bloomsbury Square, would know it no more; and none the less certain is it that in the estimation of lovers of old London this change, though perhaps essential, is for the worse, and increases the traditional disillusion which comes to every provincial walking our city pavements for the first time. Time eliminates the marks left by the worthy, as it assuredly and happily does those left by the unworthy.

Southampton Row is in a state of transition; it is rapidly losing its old-world canopy, which is being superseded by a twentieth-century coating at once indicated by loftier buildings, modernised appliances, and that inevitable appendage to the architecture of to-day—the lift. But Southampton Row—which, by the way, perpetuates the memory of Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, the son of Shakespeare's patron—has had, at one time or another, living within its gloomy limits quite a bunch of celebrities. More than one "book-shelfed" poet has taken up his abode in the Row. Gray was actually enamoured of it, and lived there for some years. To a friend he wrote as follows:—"Here is air and sunshine

and quiet to comfort you; what though I am separated from the fashionable world by broad St. Giles and many a dirty court and alley, I shall confess that I am basking all the summer, and I suppose shall be blown down all the winter besides being robbed every night." This was in 1760, when Southampton Row was not half so long as it is now, but a terrace of houses, indeed, joined by a since submerged King Street, which ran into Holborn. Gray, we are told by Edmund Gosse, looked out from his bedroom window on to "a south-west garden wall, covered with flowering jessamine through June and July. There had been roses, too, in the London garden. Gray must always have flowers about him, and he trudged down to Covent Garden every day for his sweet peas and pinks and scarlet martagon lilies, double stocks, and flowery marjoram. His drawing-room looked over Bedford Square, and a fine stretch of upland fields crowned at last against the sky by the villages of Highgate and Hampstead" What a beautiful vista! *Rus-in-urbe* with a vengeance! And now all those "upland fields" are filled with smoking chimneys and "John Streets," the habitations of the sons of toil and labour and the castles of that "great, innate mass—the middle class."

And the poet Cowper was much in the Row. He was then articled to a solicitor named Chapman, a worthy who also in his employ had Edward Thurlow, afterwards Lord Chancellor. It would seem

that both subordinates at that time allowed the impulses of self to get the better of the promptings of discipline, for Cowper wrote to his cousin, Lady Hesketh, giving anything but a picture of legal overwork. "I lived," he wrote, "that is to say, I spent my time, in Southampton Row, as you very well remember. There was I and the future Lord Chancellor constantly employed from morning to night in gigeling, and making giggle, instead of studying the law." Cowper and Thurlow frequently visited the house of the former's uncle, Mr. Astley Cowper, also in Southampton Row, and here it was that the poet formed that life-long attachment with his cousin, Theodore Jane Cowper. Another, but notorious, celebrity who dwelt in Southampton Row was the famous Dr. Dodd, who, as chaplain, author and forger, gained wide repute in this country about 1770.

The name of Dickens and the district of Bloomsbury are indelibly joined together; indeed, the hero-worshipper of the author of the immortal "Pickwick" can never pass down Doughty Street or by Tavistock House without instinctively calling to memory some of the ineffaceable witticisms in that and his other delightful books. Dickens went to 48, Doughty Street, about three months before the Queen came to the throne. Here it was that he wrote and gave to the world those two novels, in which pathos and humour, sarcasm and caricature mingle so admirably together—

"Nicholas Nickleby" and "Oliver Twist." Staying in Doughty Street for three years, Charles Dickens left in 1841, only to move to Tavistock Square, but a stone's-throw off, and take up his abode at Tavistock House, where he remained till he sold it in 1860. Dickens wrote "Bleak House," published in 1852-3, in Tavistock House: and there it was also that he amused himself and his friends by giving countless theatrical performances, in which the creator of "Little Nell" took a more than prominent part. On one occasion, when Douglas Jerrold died,



A CORNER OF RUSSELL SQUARE.



NO. 48, DOUGHTY STREET, W.C. (WHERE DICKENS RESIDED)

leaving his wife and family in far from affluent circumstances, Dickens generously devoted his house and his time to the cause of charity; he gave a series of private performances, and added to the charm of the acting none the less than to the extent of the day's receipts by appearing in every one himself. At one of these benefit occasions, it is interesting to note, Dickens produced, for the first time, Wilkie Collins' "Frozen Deep."

Tavistock Square knew Dickens no more when, in 1860, he made his permanent abode at Gadshill Place, of which, when a boy at Rochester, he had conceived a childish liking to become the owner. On learning, in 1855, that it was for sale, the novelist began negotiations for its purchase: but he bought it a year later only with a view to occasional occupation, intending to let it at intervals. However, greater attachment to the place sprang up, and, spending much time in improving it both inside and out, Dickens finally left Bloomsbury and went to Gadshill.

Russell Square came into being through the instrumentality of the then Duke of Bedford about 1778; constructed at the same time were also Brunswick Square, Tavistock Place, and part of what is now Guilford Street.

Humphrey Repton is generally conceded to have built many of the houses, and the square is named after Francis, Duke of Bedford, a statue of whom, by Westmacott, erected in 1805, faces Bedford Place and looks down on to that of Charles James Fox, in Bloomsbury Square.

Many notabilities of by-gone days have lived and died in Russell Square. At No. 65 there died Sir Thomas Lawrence, the great painter of the last George period; at another house (No. 21) the notorious criminal informer, Sir Samuel Romilly, committed suicide in 1818; and at Baltimore House, which stands at the corner of Guilford Street, Lord Baltimore gained himself a name and notoriety; moreover, in the same house there lived the Duke of Bolton, and subsequently Lord Loughborough, afterwards Earl of Rosslyn. In later days Baltimore House, though extensively altered, has known Sir Vicary Gibbs, Judge Heath, Professor Donaldson, and Sir T. N. Talfourd. No. 51 was the residence of the George Edmund Street who built the Law Courts; No. 50 was where Lord Denman lived; No. 46, Mr. Justice Holroyd; and it was at No. 56, that Browning, Wordsworth, Landor, and Proctor all met in the *salon* of Miss Mitford.

Bloomsbury Square has a tale to tell. It was at No. 6 that Lord Beaconsfield lived with his father for several years. It is said, too, that "Dizzy" revisited No. 6 many years afterwards, and asked leave to go over it. The then Prime Minister, we are told, "sat for some time pondering and reflecting—a grand past and a great future opening up before his vision—in the room in which he was born." But other historians say there is no truth in the statement that Beaconsfield was born in Bloomsbury; they assert that his father took the house in the square about 1817, when Disraeli

others observed that the steps were meant to show how the King got up to his lofty perch.

Bloomsbury Square was built by the Earl of Southampton in the first decade of Charles II.'s reign, and until the end of the seventeenth century, Southampton House, the Earl's residence, occupied the north side of the square. Lord Southampton was, of course, the father of Rachel, the wife of the Lord Russell who was executed in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Other interesting people who have lived in Bloomsbury Square are Sir Richard Steele, Addison's friend and



DUKE OF BEDFORD STATUE (RUSSELL SQUARE)

would have been thirteen years old. Be this as it may, there is little doubt that the great statesman attended St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, with his father, and it is said that "young Benjamin played with the other children in the square garden." St. George's Church, by the way, was built in 1724, and the architecture was most probably that of Hawksmore. The building cost about £10,000, but it was, we are told, "distinctly incongruous, and much criticism was evoked by its position." Horace Walpole described the steeple as a "masterpiece of absurdity," while

collaborator; and Lord Mansfield, who lived there when the Gordon rioters destroyed his house and library by fire. By a curious coincidence Lord Mansfield, as Lord Chief Justice, had to try Lord George Gordon for his share in the riots; but no one hinted that, through personal loss, the judge bore any prejudice against the prisoner.

The poet Shelley found convenient quarters at 90, Great Russell Street, which, built in 1670, was at one time described as possessing the best houses in Bloomsbury. It is a street associated with the names of many great men.

Hazlitt, for instance, the historian, used to stay with his brother at 109, when he came up to London; Kemble and Kelly, Sheridan, Admiral Sidney Smith, Sandford, and Dr. Thornton, who attended Sir William Chambers during his last illness, have all lent their lustre to this particular neighbourhood.

Bedford Square, too, can boast its celebrities. Theodore Hook was born in Charlotte Street, Bedford Square. In Hook's babyhood Charlotte Street included the present Bloomsbury Street. Writing in his diary, a friend of Hook says: "Met Hook in the Burlington Arcade; walked with him to the British Museum. As we passed down Great Russell Street, Hook paused on arriving at Charlotte Street, Bedford Square, and pointing to the N.W. corner, nearly opposite to the house (the second from the corner) in which he himself

was born, observed 'There by that lamp-post stood Martha Gypsy.'"

Doughty Street knew Sidney Smith as well as Dickens; in 1804 he went to No. 8, a house unchanged eighty years later. It was about this time that Smith was appointed Evening Chaplain to the Foundling Hospital, at a salary of £50 a year; two years after, however, he migrated to a two-story red-brick house in the more select Portman Square, W.

There are notable men still living in Bloomsbury; retiring men, who, like Mr. Richard Whiting, Mr. E. T. Cook, and others, find it necessary to be well within the call of their office, and who eschew late railway travelling, and the rumbling, ill-lit 'bus. Nor must that "noble band of literary martyrs" pass unnoticed, for to Bloomsbury probably more manuscripts have been "returned with thanks" than to any place on the face of this earth.



THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL, GUILFORD STREET

THE DUPES

WRITTEN BY RAFAEL SABATINI

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWARD J. BLAKE

CHAPTER I.

I WAS kept waiting for nigh upon an hour at my illustrious cousin's *hôtel*, in a room of surpassing elegance, sadly out of tune with the rags I wore.

Had the insolent lacquey who escorted me suited his own taste and judgment, I should have been less pleasantly lodged until the Seigneur de Launay arrived; but I had a word or two to say as to where I would wait, and when the fellow remonstrated, a threat to thrash him on the spot and have him dismissed anon, silenced him effectively.

As my ill-shod feet trod the soft carpet, and as I gazed about me at the different articles of value wherewith the room was furnished, I was sorely puzzled to understand how my cousin—whose means I knew to be far from ample—came to be so admirably lodged. To sustain such wealthy surroundings as those I contemplated, must soon bring him into a state of destitution akin to my own.

But still greater was my wonderment at the intimacy wherein, to judge by his position in the cavalcade which I had stood to see go by in the Rue St. Honoré, he was held by Louis XIII.

Was the Cardinal asleep, that he detected not this wolf in sheep's clothing? Or had the Seigneur de Launay abandoned the interests of that arch-plotter, the Duke of Orléans, and attached himself in soul as well as in body to the King?

I could not tell—for 'twas two years since my disgrace and banishment from Court—two years since I started on that downward route at a headlong pace which had brought me into the tatters that hung about me. I knew not what had taken place at Court during the period, but I did know that when I turned my back upon the Louvre, Ferdinand de Launay was already deep in the mire of half a score of Orleaniste plots, which, I had thought, would have earned him a dungeon in the Bastille long before the day whereof I write.

My speculations were ended at last by his arrival. It was announced to me by a clatter of hoofs in the courtyard below, followed by a bustle which would have honoured a prince of the blood.

There was a quick step in the ante-room beyond, then the door opened, and my cousin, handsome, flushed and breathless, stood before me.

I had expected that, seeing me in my sorry plight, chivalry would have bidden him forget our feuds, and that his greeting, if not cousinly, would at least be friendly—especially when considered that 'twas he, and not I, who sought this interview.

Not so, however. The right hand, which still clasped his hat and riding whip, remained at his side, the other rested on the pommel of his sword, and his eyes travelled over me, from my unkempt head to my well-worn boots, with a disdainful curiosity which made my gorge rise.

"So Verville," he said, at length, in a scornful tone, "'tis to this that your profligate's career has brought you!"

"Even as your treachery has earned you that suit of velvet," I retorted, towering grimly above him in my rags.

Notre Dame! How my words smote home! How I chuckled inwardly to see the flush die from the boy's face, and his teeth catch at his nether lip.

"What do you mean?" he enquired.

"Pah," I answered; "you understand me well enough."

you, why I have been forced hither without being asked if I chose to come?"

He fell back a pace, and his face assumed a look of sorrow.

"Believe me, Eugène," he exclaimed, "I would have sought you out, but that I believed you dead."

"And had not some evil angel bidden me go gape at you," I retorted sharply, "your thoughts would have been correct ere this, for to-day I am houseless and foodless, and I was on my way to the



"NOT SO, HOWEVER. THE RIGHT HAND, WHICH STILL CLASPED HIS HAT AND RIDING WHIP, REMAINED AT HIS SIDE"

He gazed at me intently for a moment, as if searching in my bold eyes to read how much I really knew. Then, flinging down his hat and whip, he advanced towards me with outstretched hand, and a false, courtier's smile upon his lips.

"Forgive me, Eugène," he said, "if I was brusque, but the sight of your garments pained me deeply, and——"

"A truce to all this, master courtier," I broke in surlily, and putting my hands behind me, "my temper is passing short and has been greatly tried this morning. Will you explain, I pray

Seine to put a fitting end to a mis-spent life, when I stopped to see the Royal cavalcade go by. *Sangdieu!* but you cut a bold figure at the King's side," I continued, with a wild laugh that startled him. "You reminded me of Cinq-Mars—'twas thus I saw him ride by the King; 'twas thus I saw him smile at the monarch's vapid jests; may you have the courage to mount the scaffold, when your turn comes, with as firm a tread!"

He went white to the very lips.

"For God's sake, Eugène, be silent!" he said, scarce above a whisper. "I mean you well."

"Then you have altered greatly since last we parted," I rejoined coldly.

But, say what I would, I could not anger him as I sought to—for I was bent upon ascertaining the reason of his increasing friendliness, and I knew that in anger a man's tongue will oft betray him.

He persisted in his protestations that he meant me well, and that he did but desire to help me retrieve my fortunes.

It sounded marvellous from the lips of scheming, selfish de Launay; but, in the end, when, among other things, he told me that he was about to marry, I, remembering how often the influence of a good woman will make a rogue honourable, and a traitor true, recognised the change that had been wrought, in my cousin's character, and believed in his sincerity.

And so my fortunes altered, and I had that day the satisfaction of beholding the eyes of the lacquey who had that morning so haughtily addressed me, grow round and large at the sight of the handsome suit of grey velvet that encased my stalwart figure.

For nearly a month I stayed on at the Hôtel de Launay, and what with sumptuous dinners and generous wines, I became each day more grateful to my cousin for having rescued me from the brink of suicide, to bring me back to a world of warmth and ease, such as I had not known for many a day. The mistrust which penury breeds in all of us was excluded from my heart by good living.

But, albeit, in a measure, my old gay recklessness was again upon me, yet at times I would chafe at the manner of my life, until in the end I broached the subject to Ferdinand. In his reply methought I found a motive for his kindness, and again I grew mistrustful.

He urged me to espouse the Orléans' cause, gather what friends had returned to me in my new prosperity, and when the time was ripe, to either join the Duke in Lorraine, or strike for him in Paris, as should seem best. I heard him through; then, with a sad, bitter laugh—

"So, Ferdinand," I said, "it is for this that you saved me from the Seine? Hélas! I had ascribed a better motive to your generosity."

"Nor were you wrong in doing so," he cried hotly. "It is naught to me whether you serve the Duke or not; you are still my cousin, and my most trusted friend. But, when you ask me for employment, would you have me counsel you to take service in a cause to which I am at heart averse?"

I was forced to grant that he was right.

"When first I saw you in the Rue St. Honoré," he continued, "I will frankly admit, Eugène, that your condition* struck me as that of a desperate man, ripe for any enterprise that might put a coat on your back and a meal in your stomach, and it was chiefly with the hope of obtaining another recruit for Gaston d'Orléans that I sent my servant after you. But, before I saw you here, nobler thoughts had overcome my purpose, and again I say to-day, that it matters little to me whether you serve the Duke or not."

Before so frank an admission my mistrust melted like snow before the sun, and for some days no more was said. When at length we did revert to the subject, it was I who led the conversation, and I listened earnestly to my cousin's arguments.

I knew much of the state of France, but chiefly as seen through the eyes of Richelieu's enemies; for, during the past two years, gamblers and bullies had been my chief associates, and such men as these cordially hated the Cardinal, who made war upon them and their brawling customs. Coupled with this was a (hitherto passive) hatred for the King, who had disgraced me: so that it is not unnatural I turned a willing ear to my cousin's doctrines—and so persuasive was his tongue that in the end I became as bold an Orléaniste as you might find in France, awaiting impatiently the time to unsheathe my ever-ready sword.

CHAPTER II.

And so the weeks wore on apace, and the trees grew green again, in their April garb, until one day my cousin startled me by suggesting that I should accompany him to Court. I reminded him of the manner of my dismissal; but we laughed at my scruples, saying the

King's memory was short, and that, as his cousin, I might rely upon a gracious welcome.

His arguments prevailed, and I went. But I had not been wrong in my surmise that Louis XIII. would remember, and still hold me in ill-odour; for, at the very mention of my name, his brow was wrinkled by an angry frown, whilst Richelieu watched me surreptitiously through half-closed lids.

But de Launay bent forward, and said something in the Royal ear which drove the frown from Louis' face, and, with a gracious smile, he held out his hand for me to kiss.

And as I turned me, after that ceremony was over, I found his smile reflected upon the faces of his courtiers, one and all, and everywhere was I received with friendly words and an attention almost servile—so high in favour stood my cousin then.

This was truly the beginning of a new era in my life, for amongst that throng of courtly stars there was one that to me shone more brightly than all the rest, and drew me towards it to become its satellite.

'Tis passing strange, and to me inexplicable, that I—who thought to have done with all the follies of adolescence—should at the age of thirty have found in a heart grown callous and hard with the reckless life I had lived, a spot still vulnerable to a woman's smiles. But more inexplicable still was it to me to find my love returned—to see the blush mount to my lady's cheeks and pleasure brighten her eyes at my approach.

And so it fell out that I was less often to be found at the Hôtel de Launay than at the side of Mademoiselle de Troiscantins.

I was no longer a ruined gamester; no longer a man of blighted hopes and gloomy moods; but a courtier once more—a gallant! a fool! My life became one round of *fêtes*. Not that these rapid merrymakings pleased or amused me, but they kept me near to her I loved.

My bygone recklessness arose before me like a reproachful sprite, and as I gazed upon the lovely Madeline, so pure and saintly, a blush of shame

would warm my sallow skin, evoked by the realisation of how vile and utterly unworthy I was of the tenderness she lavished on me.

My cousin would quip me at times, and mock the decorum which now marked my once ribald tongue, and I would sullenly resent his jests, and pursue my endeavours to cleanse my over-maculate honour.

Then again, as I remembered that, in spite of all, I was but a penniless adventurer, whose very finery belonged to another's wardrobe, I would determine to quit Paris and take my unfortunate presence to some other clime. But when I went to say farewell, my courage failed me—my adieux were unspoken and I lingered on.

Next I determined to have done with plotting; but here a rude shock awaited me, for, when I broached the matter to de Launay,

"I'll be sworn," he said, "that your leathery conscience, which has at last been awakened to a sense of duty by Mademoiselle de Troiscantins, has something to do with this.

"Peste!" I replied impatiently; "can you not leave Mademoiselle out of the discussion?"

"Nay," he rejoined with a laugh, "methinks I do well to mention her, for let me tell you, Master Saint, that there is no more fervent Orléaniste in all France than this chit of a girl."

"Impossible!" I cried angrily; "she is no plotter! Look at her face, man. Why, 'tis a mirror of purity and innocence!"

He laughed a cynical laugh that angered me, as, with a toss of his fine head, he answered,

"Who spoke of plotters? I will allow that this angel of yours is—so far as a man may judge—an incarnation of virtue and sanctity; but be her soul in whatever state it may, her heart, her sympathies are in the Orleaniste cause."

I was in no mood to allow his rascally tongue to paint for me my lady's character, so, taking up my hat, I went to seek the lady herself, and from her own lips I learnt that what de Launay had said was true.

Cordieu! How differently I viewed the Orleanistes from that day. We

were no longer plotters and traitors, but apostles and martyrs of a holy cause in the defence of which I was prepared to sacrifice everything down to the last drop of blood in my veins—so mighty a sophist is love!

There was but one touch wanting to turn my treason into fanaticism, and that touch came from the King's own hand.

It was at a levée, one morning. He paused before me in the ante-chamber and ran me over with an almost mocking glance.

"Ha! Chevalier," he murmured, "what a courtier you have become; you are never absent from our side."

I knew not how to read his words, nor what might underlie them, but the tone in which they were delivered boded ill.

"Your Majesty is gracious enough to permit me the honour of being near you," I answered, bowing.

"Yes, yes," he said, so loud that all might hear him. "It gives us pleasure to see your cousin's clothes—he is a man of taste."

A titter went through the crowd, and for a moment I stood dumbfounded, unable to believe that a King's lips could shape the vulgar taunt, whereby I recognised that I was again dismissed from Court.

I stood before that Royal fool, white with passion, and the glance I bent upon him was so terrible that he quailed before it, and, maybe, repented him of what he had said. Then, of a sudden, I broke into a loud discordant laugh which frightened those about me, and the old foolhardiness which had made me scoff at destiny was again upon me.

A stinging retort was on my lips; but remembering that it might cost me my life, or at least my liberty, and that whilst I lived I might be avenged, I checked my tongue betimes, and, turning on my heel, without another word, stalked boldly and firmly from the Royal presence.

And as I hastened home, to tell de Launay of the insult which had been offered me, there arose in my mind the memory of certain words that Mademoiselle de Troiscantins had spoken days before:

"If, by some act of God, this worthless King were set aside, and the impending civil war averted, how much misery would France be spared!"

Yes, *Moridieu*! I was resolved! My hand would be the act of God, and with one bold stroke I would gain the day for Gaston d'Orléans, without the butchery of battle. One man should die; Louis, the fool—'twas thus I dubbed him in my anger—and his death should spare many a woman the tears of widowhood.

My cousin appeared frightened by my fury and by the resolve which I communicated to him, and sought at first to dissuade me. But when, growing calmer, I reasoned with him, and showed him what a victory it would gain for the Duke of Orléans, he wavered, and at last bid me take counsel with Mademoiselle de Troiscantins and be guided by her judgment.

I agreed to this, and entering de Launay's carriage, I drove to the Rue de l'Epée.

I found Madeline in a state of great excitement, for news had been just brought her of what had taken place at the Louvre; and, upon seeing me, she vented in unmeasured terms her indignation at the gross insult which I had received.

"The King will repent, never fear," I cried, "but not until——"

"Until what?"

"Until it is too late—until his hour is at hand!"

She recoiled from me, and her cheeks went deadly pale. "Do *you* mean to kill him?" she gasped.

Calmly I told her what was in my mind, adding that I had come to her, so that she—who had become the guiding star of my life—might give me counsel in this extremity. Nor did I forget to point out what a solution it would afford to the Orléans difficulties.

After she had overcome the natural horror wherewith at first my purpose had inspired her, she pondered deeply for some moments; then, raising her wonderful eyes to mine—

"Can you do it without peril to yourself?" she asked.

"I think so," I replied. "Moreover, there will be small risk, for when the

King is dead, Orléans will be master ; and I do not think he will forget me."

"Then go," she said, placing her arms about my neck, and speaking in a tender, almost tearful voice. "Go, Eugène, and strike this great blow for a good and sacred cause ; and when it is done, come back to me—I will shield you, my love, and, if you ask me, I will marry you, so that none shall thereafter reproach you with your poverty, for I am rich."

My senses swam ; I seemed drunk with happiness, and for a moment all in the world but this lovely woman was forgotten. Then, as the memory of grim realities awakened in my mind, I tore myself from those clinging arms and went to lay my plans.

There was to be a *fête* at the Palais Bourdois upon the following night. Then would I reckon with Louis the Just.

CHAPTER III.

Craftily and cunningly did I prepare, so that no suspicion might attach to me—for the fate of Ravaillac, the last regicide, was still in my mind, and I had no stomach for the *brodéquin* and the scalding oil. Moreover, there was happiness stored up for my future, and remembering that I had tasted so little of it in the past, it is but natural that I clung to a life which had suddenly become of value to me.

The King, I had ascertained, would return alone to the Louvre. It was my purpose to follow him, disguised as an attendant, conceal myself in his bed-chamber, and strike as soon as he was alone.

Albeit I had received an invitation, I dared not be present at the *fête* : but having assumed my disguise—retaining, however, my sword, lest I should have need of it—I entered the grounds of the Palais Bourdois as eleven was striking.

I wandered aimlessly about the garden, watching the lighted windows, my mind dwelling more upon Madeline and the days to come than upon the task before me, when, suddenly, a murmur of voices close at hand arrested my attention. I stopped, and, crouching behind a tree, I peered about me.

For some moments all remained still,

and I was beginning to think that my over-wrought fancy had tricked me, when my vigilant eye caught the shimmer of something—probably, I told myself, some garment.

Stepping gently forth, I moved on tip-toe and under cover of the trees, drawn, *volens volens*, towards that inhabited spot. Once the gravel crunched, and once a twig snapped 'neath my tread, and each time I paused, with beating heart and listening ears ; but all was still save for that faint sound of voices. Then 'twas a laugh, a woman's smothered laugh, that startled me ; but when at last from my position I was enabled to distinguish two human faces, faintly discernible in the light which fell upon them from the palace windows, it seemed to me that my heart had stopped beating, and that I was nigh upon death from the shock of what I beheld.

On a stone bench sat Ferdinand de Launay and Mademoiselle de Troiscantins !

His arm was about her neck, and her head—that lovely head I knew so well—rested upon his shoulder. The light was uncertain, and as I stood there, not ten paces from the traitors, with clenched teeth and the breath rushing stertorously through my nostrils, I prayed to God that either my eyes were being cheated, or else that I might awaken from the ghastly nightmare that was upon me.

Then, of a sudden, my own name came wafted towards me on the gentle breeze, followed by a sigh, a laugh, and a mocking epithet, and I knew at length that I was the victim of neither dream nor hallucination, but of treachery—dastardly, unseemly treachery ; and in my anger I drew nearer to the tree that shaded them, until I could hear their whispered words.

Oh God ! Why did I live to learn what their conversation told me ? Why had not some merciful assassin ended my life an hour before, whilst I was happy in the belief that I was loved ?

I cannot, even now that years are past, go over that conversation of theirs in detail—it was too horrible, too revolting. Enough when I tell you that I gathered from it that my cousin, whose extravagance had well-nigh ruined him, had



"ON A STONE BENCH SAT FERDINAND DE LAUNAY AND MADEMOISELLE DE TROISCONTINS!"

betrayed my father and my elder brother, for association in a Gascon plot. My father had already mounted the scaffold at Toulouse, and my brother was to follow soon. It but remained to remove me, and for this my cousin had befriended me, and with his diabolical cunning had inveigled me in the Orleaniste cause.

I understood how all those hints thrown out by Madeline, of a bold hand that should end the battle at once by felling one of the leaders, were but meant to fire my enamoured senses.

It was de Launay himself—who had whispered in the Royal ear the insult which I had received from the King, whereby he meant to bring matters to the crisis to which they had come. I was to slay Louis XIII.; he would denounce and destroy me, seat Orléans upon the throne of France, and, himself, inherit the

Verville estates and title which were mine, although I knew it not.

Mille diables! But they had schemed well, these two! And had it not been for their imprudent conversation, they would of a certainly have succeeded.

Oh, the bitterness of that disillusion! I was a fool! A shameless woman's dupe!

"To-morrow, Madeline," I heard him say, as they arose to return to the palace, "to-morrow, when this *second Ravallac* shall have done his work and been rewarded, I shall be a rich and powerful man. You will share my power and my wealth, sweetheart, and we will——"

I heard no more. It was with difficulty that I saved myself from swooning as I stood there, clinging for support to a friendly bough, peering after their retreating figures and invoking my heart's unspoken curses on their heads.

CHAPTER IV.

I met the Seigneur de Launay half-an-hour later, as he emerged from the Palais Bourdois. He started at seeing me.

"Is anything wrong?" he whispered feverishly.

"Nothing of moment. But unless swift measures be taken, something will be."

I spoke calmly and even mildly, my fury mastered for the while.

"Dismiss your carriage," I said, "and come with me. We must pay a visit."

"Is it necessary that I should accompany you?" he asked; and I knew full well what was in his craven mind.

"I can trust to no other companion; go alone I may not; yet, if I do not go, the King will be still alive to-morrow, and our chance will be lost."

"What is it?" he enquired.

"Treason!" I answered fiercely; "black, dastardly treason. But never fear, I shall be in time to choke it before any harm is done. Come!"

In silence he walked along beside me for some ten minutes, during which he appeared lost in his musings. So lost, that he marked not the way I led him; until, as we entered the Rue de l'Epée, he suddenly lifted up his head.

"Ho there! Eugène, whither are we bound?" he cried, recognising the street.

"But a few steps further," I answered abruptly, and paced on until we stood before a door, upon which the number "24" was just discernible in the light of a lamp hard by.

"We are arrived," I said, stopping and turning to face him.

"But this, if I mistake not, is the house of Mademoiselle de Troiscantins."

"Precisely," I answered with a laugh, "and it is here that the treason, the damnable treason whereof I spoke, was hatched. The die is cast, most noble cousin; you and that woman have made an Orléaniste of me; I may not go back, for you have duped me too far, therefore I go on. To-night, I set out to join the Duke of Orléans in Lorraine, but before I go, there will be a reckoning."

I faced him now, and my breath was

hot and my eyes ablaze with the fury that possessed me. His jaw fell, and his handsome face grew ashen, as he caught the meaning of my words.

"I do not understand," he stammered.

"You will understand *everything* in a few minutes," I answered derisively, "for we are taught that in death all is made clear. You will understand how you duped me, and how I, in my turn, have duped you to accompany me hither so that justice may be done."

I laughed, and at the sound he recoiled as if I had struck him.

"You are mistaken," he gasped, trembling in every limb.

I flung down my hat and cloak, and unsheathed my sword as I advanced upon him.

"Draw! traitor! hound! Judas! Draw!" I thundered, flashing my blade before his eyes.

"You are mistaken," he repeated feebly, shrinking from me.

"What!" I jeered. "Can one so bold to plot be so slow to draw? Is there no manhood in you, that you stand there trembling like one smitten with the ague? Or has the sight of steel struck terror into your woman's heart?"

He threw back his head at the taunt; then, with a muttered oath, he drew and fell on guard.

Mortdieu! how I toyed with him! The hour was late, and none came that way to interrupt us. For full ten minutes I humoured his blundering swordplay, and mocked him the while with a recitation of his sins, asking him how it felt to die unshriven. He saw his death in my eyes, heard it in my voice, felt it in my wrists. The sweat burst into great beads upon his forehead, and in that ten minutes he suffered twenty agonies.

At length, the rumble of approaching wheels told me that Mademoiselle was nearing home, and that my sport must end. With a ringing disengage I forced his enfeebled guard, and passed my blade through his left breast.

A fearful shriek burst from his lips: he writhed for a second on my point



"MORTDIKU! HOW I TOVED WITH HIM!"

like a wounded worm; then fell forward, and was dead before I had turned him over.

Seizing him, I dragged him from the middle of the road, where we had fought, to the door of Mademoiselle's house. With his own dagger I pinned a slip of paper to his breast, whereon I had written: "*An offering of her dupe,*

'the second Ravallac,' to Mademoiselle de Troiscantins."

Her coach was coming down the street as I completed my revengeful task; so, sheathing my sword and straightening my cloak, I moved swiftly away, leaving that carrion across her doorstep to greet her with its ghastly message.



THE GRAY FORGET-ME-NOTS

You will not find them in the fields—
The flowers that are so young and gray;
The breadth of summer scarcely yields
Such beauties to the sun as they.

Search early in earth's hallowed spots,
Look late—but you will never find
The lovely gray forget-me-nots
That make their sisters blue seem blind.

A few quick years ago God wrought
Two flowers from twilit April skies;
A perfect home for them He sought—
And so my love received her eyes.

They are the flowers I hope to see
Until my last of lights has set.
And, while a spark remains for me,
God knows that I shall not forget.

J. J. BELL.

A New Unsinkable Boat

BY HERBERT C. FYFE.

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS



BEFORE the dawn of this century, the efforts that were made for the preservation of life at sea were of the most meagre description, and, as a consequence, many lives were then lost which to-day, thanks to our improved method, would have inevitably been saved.

The "perils of the sea" remain as fearful as ever they did, but in venturing on the ocean nowadays we have the satisfaction of knowing that every precaution is taken to save the lives of those on board should the gallant liner meet with any mishap.

The establishment of lighthouses and lightships round the coasts, the organisation of the coastguard service and its appliances for life-saving, the placing of buoys to mark a channel or to warn a vessel off some rock or shoal, and last, but by no means least, the invention of the life-boat—all these have been of incalculable benefit to mankind; but while congratulating ourselves that so much has been done for "those who go down to the sea in ships," we must bear in mind that perfection has not yet been reached, and that, in many ways, present methods might well be improved.

In the present article it is our desire to call attention to a new form of self-righting and unsinkable life-boat, the invention of Mr. Edward S. Norris, which is a great advance on the type now to be found at stations around our coasts.

Before, however, dealing with the new boat, a word must be said about the present one. The self-righting life-

boat adopted by the Royal National Life-Boat Institution cannot be regarded as the invention of any one particular person, it is rather the *quintessence* of a number of former attempts. So far back as 1785, one Lionel Lukie, a coach-builder in Long Acre, took out a patent for a boat which he described as "un-immergible." Following on the same lines, Henry Greathead, James Beechie, and James Peake all invented life-boats, the best features of which have been preserved in the one now in use.

The life-boat of to-day possesses eight important qualities, which have been enumerated as follows:—

1. Buoyancy. 2. Resistance to upsetting. 3. Power to right itself if upset.
4. Power of immediate self-discharge when filled with water. 5. Strength.
6. Stowage room. 7. Speed in a heavy sea. 8. Facility in launching and taking the shore.

The buoyancy is secured by means of a water-tight deck floor, air cases round the sides, and two large air chambers fore and aft. Its self-righting power is due to these elevated air chambers; when the boat is upset, it cannot rest on these, but rolls on one side, then the heavy iron keel and ballast serve to drag it back to its right position in a few seconds.

Mr. E. S. Norris, a director of the London and India Docks Joint Committee, and formerly M.P. for the Tower Hamlets, who has been for nearly the whole period of his life associated with shipping interests, was struck by the great loss of life at sea, and for some



MR. NORRIS'S TUBULAR LIFE-BOAT

years past has been experimenting with a view to improving life-boats, life-buoys, and other kinds of life-saving apparatus.

His investigations resulted in the invention of a "tubular" life-boat, which Mr. Norris claims is both self-righting and absolutely unsinkable. In order to prove the correctness of his assertions, Mr. Norris arranged a few weeks ago for a demonstration, at the St. Katharine's Dock, of his system for rendering boats unsinkable. The trials made on the occasion were completely successful, and demonstrated to the distinguished personages and experts who watched them the value of Mr. Norris's ideas.

Further trials have since been made at the West India Docks, and on each occasion have, in all circumstances, been entirely successful.

The boat has been run off the quay or landing-stage high above water (as, say, from the deck of a steamer) in the roughest manner, and without tackle of any kind. She has righted at once on reaching the water. This is a very severe test.

The writer has had an opportunity of seeing some experiments with a tubular life-boat for himself, and he can testify to its merits. The photograph accompanying this article will enable readers to see of what the life-boat is really capable.

We have seen that the buoyancy of the ordinary life-boat is secured by two large air chambers, one in the bow, the other in the stern, a water-tight deck floor, and air-cases round the sides. Now, in the event of a collision or other accident, one or more of these air-chambers is often "stove in" and the water enters, thus rendering the life-boat liable to sink.

Mr. Norris's idea is that a large number of small cylindrical tubes of air would offer greater security than large air chambers, which fill with water when damaged. He set to work and designed a life-boat which was constructed upon a multitubular principle, which may be aptly termed a series of small cylindrical compartments like the honey-comb in a bee-hive.

Instead of the two large air-chambers

A NEW UNSINKABLE BOAT

—bow and stern—of the ordinary life-boat, Mr. Norris's boat has no less than three hundred small cells or cases which are both air-tight and water-tight. The exterior of the boat is somewhat similar to the present life-boats in use by the Royal National Life-Boat Institution, but with the additional advantage that every compartment or tank is fitted and filled with a series of these water-tight

manner, and by skilful arrangement and adaptation in construction the "Norris Tubular Life-Boat" is, when turned completely over (even with mast and sail up), capable of at once righting herself.

Mr. Norris's invention does not, however, necessitate the construction of a special form of boat. In ordinary ships' boats this patent is adopted for imme-



THE LIFE-BOAT RIGHTING ITSELF

cells or tubes. Each air cylinder is, therefore, converted into an air-chamber of as many compartments as it will hold cylinders. Thus in case of collision no water can enter in bulk, because only a few of the cells would probably be damaged. This boat's buoyancy is unaffected, and she may safely be described as "unsinkable." The cells and tubes are constructed of a light elastic vegetable material, and they make no appreciable difference in the weight of the boat or in the requirements of air space under the Board of Trade regulations.

The cells can be arranged in the compartments; in an unsymmetrical

diate use at small cost by means of lengths of canvas, to which are fitted the buoyancy tubes; on an emergency these could be cut to lengths, quickly fastened in, when the boat becomes unsinkable.

On the occasion when the writer had the opportunity of witnessing the trials of the life-boat, two boats were shown fitted with Mr. Norris's device. The first was a specially constructed life-boat with the water-tight tubes disposed fore and aft as well as along her sides. On being artificially capsized and turned keel upwards she righted herself in a few seconds, and when a mast and sail were added the result was equally satisfactory.

In the second case an ordinary boat had a few dozen of the tubes stitched on canvas nailed along her sides. These were quite sufficient to render her unsinkable. When the bung was taken out she naturally was filled with water, but even though she carried seven men she could not be made to sink. Without Mr. Norris's invention, the same boat sank without one man in it.

The adaptation of the tubular system to the boats which are carried on every seagoing vessel should be certainly considered, for there is little doubt that if this were done many lives would be saved. On many occasions when the boats of some doomed ship have been lowered they have been overturned or have sunk by some mishap or another, and all those who were in them have been drowned. The same boat, however, to which buoyancy tubes have been affixed, would be unsinkable, even if it should become upset, and the great shipping companies would do well to give the invention a fair trial.

Mr. Norris's system can be applied to

the construction of an unsinkable life-raft by attachment to cabin furniture or deck fittings; and a tubular life-belt, which is lighter and more buoyant than those in use, has been found capable of supporting three persons in the water, while the ordinary cork belt only balances one.

This invention may also be applied to vessels of special form or shape for special purposes, as, for instance, to light-ships, which are very apt to be run down in foggy weather. It would be a great advantage if these could be rendered unsinkable.

The losses of sailing vessels fell from an average of 484 vessels, with a tonnage of 122,554, for the previous twenty-one years to an actual loss of 298 vessels, with a tonnage of 46,220, in 1897-98. The losses of steam vessels were 121, with a tonnage of 95,879, while the average for the previous twenty-one years was 124 vessels with a tonnage of 90,225. The number of casualties reported in 1897-98 as having occurred to foreign vessels on or near the coasts of



AN ORDINARY BOAT FITTED WITH MR. NORRIS'S BUOYANCY TUBES



THE BOAT REFUSES TO SINK THOUGH FULL OF WATER

the United Kingdom and British possessions abroad was 581, with a tonnage of 313,533, of which 86, with a tonnage of 37,912, were attended with total loss of the vessels. The losses of steamships were 11, with a tonnage of 8,966, and of sailing ships 75, with a tonnage of 28,946. The number of casualties in rivers and harbours was 378, with a tonnage of 245,995, but of these only three vessels, with a tonnage of 1,022, were totally lost.

Turning to the statistics showing the loss of life, we gather that during the last twenty-two years 6,124 wrecks and casualties to ships belonging to the United Kingdom have been attended with fatal results to 38,382 persons, of whom 32,854 were members of the crews, and 5,528 were passengers, pilots, or other persons not on articles of agreement. The average annual loss during the twenty-two years was 1,744 persons, consisting of 1,493 crew and 251 passengers, and the loss in 1897-98 was 681 persons, of whom 629 were crew and 52 were passengers. The number of sea-

men lost in 1897-98 was lower than in any of the previous twenty-one years, and the number of passengers lost was lower than in any of those years except five. Compared with the average for the twenty-two years, the figures show a decrease of 864 in the number of seamen and of 199 in the number of passengers lost. The average number of seamen lost in sailing vessels was 997 and of passengers 54, against 378 seamen and 14 passengers lost in 1897-98. The average number of seamen lost in steamships was 495 and of passengers 196, against 251 seamen and 38 passengers lost in 1897-98. Of the 52 passengers lost in 1897-98 from vessels belonging to the United Kingdom only one was lost from a vessel holding a passenger certificate from the Board of Trade, and none were lost from emigrant ships. Fifty-two lives were lost by 16 casualties to foreign vessels on or near British coasts, and 19 by the wreck of the American steamer "Idaho," on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie.

The return further points out that to

assist in realising the risk to human life by shipwreck it may be useful to take into account the lives saved as well as the lives lost. The total number of seamen and passengers saved from wrecks of British vessels everywhere and of foreign vessels on or near the coasts of British territory during the year 1897-98 was 6,449, of whom 2,397 were saved on or near the coasts of the United Kingdom, 1,842 on or near the coasts of British possessions abroad, 1,228 from British vessels on or near the coasts of foreign countries, and 982 on the high seas. Of the 2,397 lives saved on the coasts of the United Kingdom—*i.e.*, within a line drawn round the coasts about ten miles from the most prominent headlands—196 were saved by the rocket apparatus and assistance from the shore, 419 were saved by life-boats, 143 were saved by Coastguard boats and other craft, 625 were saved by passing ships, and 978 were saved by the ships' own boats. Of the 4,052 lives saved from wrecks abroad 205 were saved by rocket apparatus and ropes from shore and 83 by life-boats, but the majority were saved by the ships' own boats (2,377) and by passing ships (1096).

It may be interesting to note that Mr. Norris is the Treasurer and Chairman of the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum, at Snaresbrook, Essex. He has been a member of the managing committee

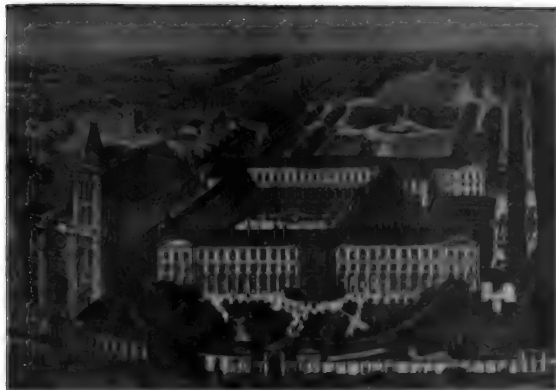
for thirty-seven years. This national institution was founded in 1827, and it maintains and educates 300 orphans of British merchant seamen. Her Majesty the Queen is patron, H.R.H. the Duke of York is the president.

It is evident that special importance attaches to Mr. Norris's valuable invention at the present time, when so many of our soldiers and sailors are disembarking on dangerous coasts, and it may be noted how frequently casualties occur to sailors and others at our naval ports, when returning to their ships after dark. The same may be said with reference to our pleasure boats at seaside resorts, where often loss of life occurs from panic or other causes.

By means of Mr. Norris's Boat Belt—on his system of air-tight tubes or cells—fixed fore and aft, and alongside every boat, they would be practically made unsinkable, and loss of life avoided. The disaster some time ago to the Margate surf-boat, when she was found on the East Coast, bottom upwards, could not have occurred. Again, the loss of four young fishermen lately, in the presence of their poor father, is another sad case. Their boat sunk beneath them; the father alone was saved.

It has been proposed to Mr. Norris to send his life-boat and other life-saving appliances under his patent to the Paris Exhibition next year, with a view to competition with others.





GENERAL VIEW

The Daughters of the Legion of Honour

WRITTEN BY MABEL HUMBERT, Author of "Continental Chit-Chat"

ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

MOST of the English who conscientiously "do" Paris and its environs include St. Denis and the last resting-place of the French sovereigns in their programme.

There, to the right of the old Abbey, they will notice a flag floating over an imposing-looking gateway; and if their French is equal to the inquiry prompted by their thirst for knowledge, they will learn that it is the entrance to the educational establishment of the Legion of Honour.

When Napoleon instituted the Order he determined to provide the means for

giving a good education to the daughters of the poorer Legionaries; and of the houses established for this purpose, that of St. Denis, dating from 1809, is the largest and most important. About a thousand girls are being educated at present under the auspices of the *Grand Chancelier de la Legion d'Honneur*: 500 at St. Denis (or, to be quite accurate, 496); 250 at the Castle of Ecouen, in Seine and Oise; and 250 at Les Loges, in the Forest of St. Germain. Eight hundred of these children are the daughters of officers inscribed on the rolls of the Legion of Honour, and are boarded, educated, and clothed free of all charge; one hundred are the

daughters of civilians having the right to sport the red ribbon at their button-hole, and are likewise received on the same advantageous terms, and the remaining hundred are the daughters of non-decorated officers admitted on the yearly payment of 1,000 francs (forty pounds), provided the cross has been bestowed on their grandfather or on an uncle who relinquishes his rights to a free education for a child of his own in favour of his niece.

To secure the admittance of a child application must be made to the *Grand Chancelier*, who will examine the father's or relative's papers and make inquiries concerning the family. This little investigation satisfactorily concluded, the child will be authorised to go up for the next preliminary examination.

This is not a very terrible ordeal, yet very tear-stained are some of the papers handed in, and many an amusing instance of imperfectly-digested knowledge comes to the notice of the examiner. This year one candidate located the Suez Canal in the Hymn (*sic*) of Panama, and another boldly asserted that the capital of China (*La Chine*) was Chinon! The girls must be between ten and twelve years of age, and are admitted for a period of seven years; at the end of this time the schools send forth extremely well-educated girls, quite capable of earning their own living should the circumstances of the family demand it. At St. Denis they are prepared for the higher examination, and special attention is given to music and drawing; at Ecouen a speciality is made of preparing them for the examination of the postal and telegraphic services, and they are instructed in book-keeping and shorthand writing, while at Les Loges especial prominence is given to the arts of housewifery.

I have not yet had an opportunity of seeing either Ecouen or Les Loges, but I have often been privileged to visit St. Denis, and will therefore confine my remarks to that establishment. It was originally a monastery belonging to the order of St. Benedict, and many traces of its former owners still linger. The solemn old cloisters remind one most of their former presence, and one can picture the cowed forms pacing noiselessly

along where girlish figures now flit to and fro with bursts of merry laughter. It was there that the monks were buried, but some years ago, when various improvements were effected, their remains were disinterred and conveyed to another resting-place, with the exception of the bones of one of the brothers, whose wish to sleep his last long sleep at the foot of the statue of the Virgin and Child was respected.

The large dining-hall was formerly the refectory, and there is still to be seen a kind of pulpit whence spiritual food was served out to the Benedictines while they ministered to the wants of the inner man. Now also the pupils are required to curb the unruly member while at table, and to attend strictly to the business in hand. It is only on Sundays and Thursdays (the weekly half-holiday) that this rule is relaxed, and it has been noticed that the meals last ten minutes longer in consequence. The cells of the monks have been converted into three large dormitories. The narrow little beds may seem to be very close together, but the great height of the rooms ensures plenty of air to each child. It is delightfully cool here in summer, and in winter the windows are closed at three o'clock to allow the heating apparatus in the basement to diffuse an agreeable warmth before the pupils come to bed at nine. In case she feels chilly each girl is provided, in addition to the kind of dressing-jacket, which takes the place of a nightdress, with a cotton handkerchief to throw round her shoulders, and also with a comical little nightcap. On a slightly raised platform, surrounded with curtains, stands the bed for one of the younger mistresses, who take it in turns to keep order in the dormitories, for never, either by night or by day, are the girls left to their own devices. In each room I also noticed a very comfortable armchair, which, I was told, was placed there for the night-watcher, whose duty it is to cover up the restless sleepers, to administer cough mixtures to those whose rest is broken, and to watch over the slumbers of all her young charges in general. It must be a great temptation in that cosy chair not to sink into the arms of Murphy, as said the

native of the Emerald Isle, but a cunning contrivance which has to be set at every hour guards against this eventuality, and a report has to be made to the lady principal every morning. The girls rise at six in the winter and at half-past five in summer. The younger children are only required to strip their beds, but the elder ones have to make their own.

One of the class rooms was formerly the apartment where the Benedictines copied rare old manuscripts, and I

schools, and a minister of the Reformed Church officiates every Sunday at St. Denis, and returns during the week to give religious instruction.

In my peregrination through the huge building, up broad staircases, and down endless corridors, I was also shown the bath-room, with rows of baths, each curtained off, the library of 6,000 volumes, the rooms lined with enormous presses containing neat piles of snowy underlinen, the laboratory, where simple remedies are prepared, and where the



REFECTORY

greatly fear that the girls do not bend over their work with the same love and assiduity the monks brought to their task.

The gymnasium is fitted up in a small chapel, formerly dedicated to St. Catherine, and which the monks would be horrified to see put to such a use. The chapel, which is now used for divine service, contains nothing that will especially attract the visitor's attention. The majority of the pupils are naturally Roman Catholics; but girls belonging to all creeds are admitted into the

girls meekly come to imbibe their cod-liver oil, or whatever medicine has been prescribed for them. The hospital was also pointed out to me in an isolated part of the house; but, as several cases of measles were being treated there, I contented myself with viewing it from a distance.

I have already said nine hundred of the girls are educated free, gratis, and for nothing. At St. Denis, however, an entrance fee of three hundred francs has to be paid for each child, to cover

the cost of her outfit. All the pupils are dressed alike—black stuff dresses of the plainest make, white turned-down collars, black aprons, grey stockings and black shoes, and a cape of the same material as the dress is worn in winter. Fashions may come, and fashions may go, but their costume never varies; the only heed that is paid to the vagaries of Madame la Mode is sometimes to change the shape of the hat when it becomes too utterly out of date. At present black straw sailor hats are worn, trimmed with a simple band of ribbon, and are equally suitable for the younger girls, with their short hair, as for the elder ones with their neat chignons. Pigtales or flowing locks are not tolerated at the Legion of Honour; the silken tresses of the new arrivals are pitilessly offered up on the altar of Hygeia, and it is only when the girls reach an age when they may be safely trusted to look after their hair with the necessary care, that it is allowed to grow to be done up in a severely simple style in keeping with its owner's general appearance. A touch of colour is given by the woollen ribbons worn round the waist and brought up under the arms, over the shoulders and down the back to meet at the waist again. The colour of this ribbon shows the class to which the girl belongs: green represents the lowest class—a most appropriate colour for them, as one of the English probationers laughingly told me. Then follow successively violet, orange, blue, scarlet, white, and finally a rainbow combination of all the foregoing colours as the distinctive sign of the highest class. On the plain black dresses the monthly and yearly medals show up well, much to their proud owners' satisfaction. Prizes are also given at St. Denis, but the medals are a great means of exciting emulation among the girls, and are bestowed not on those who have distinguished themselves in their studies only, but have also been remarked for their general good conduct.

The staff of St. Denis, as that of the other schools, is appointed by the *Grand Chancelier*, and is recruited, with very rare exceptions, among former pupils who have shown special aptitude for

teaching. These young ladies, while probationers, continue to be dressed like the pupils, a small red ribbon on their bodices alone showing the rank they hold, and nine francs a month is the modest remuneration they receive. Very glad must the senior probationer be when a vacancy occurs, and with a salary increased to a thousand francs a year, she gains the privilege of selecting her own attire, and likewise of paying for it, which last operation has fewer charms about it. But if the make and material of her dresses is left to her own taste, she must still keep to the same funereal hue, and black also must her hats and bonnets be, though she may introduce a touch of white to relieve them. All the mistresses wear a cross closely resembling that of the Legion of Honour, and bearing the inscription: *Honneur et Patrie-Maisons d'Education de la Legion d'Honneur*. This cross, attached to a red ribbon, is worn to the left side of the bodice, but the highest ladies on the staff, who are entrusted with the superintendence of the instruction in general, of the house-keeping, the infirmary, and the clothing department, fix it to a kind of broad red collar, and *Madame la Surintendante*, representing the highest authority of all, is easily recognised by the wide red riband crossing her chest from the left shoulder, and at the extremity of which the cross is attached. This lady, Madame Ryckebusch, also enjoys the distinction of being one of the few women on whom the cross of a knight of the Legion of Honour has been conferred, a distinction to which she was amply entitled by her long and distinguished services. The former *surintendantes* were invariably titled ladies, the widows of distinguished general officers, who consequently had little or no experience to help them in the fulfilment of their duties. A new departure was made in the appointment of Madame Ryckebusch, in 1888, who, having been a pupil at St. Denis, has, we may say, risen from the ranks, and after spending her whole life, save the earliest years of childhood, in the house, is eminently qualified to fill her responsible position.

It will be noticed that all the mis-

tresses, though unmarried, are always addressed as "Madame." These ladies reside in the school, but some ten or twelve masters, among them some of the best known professors in Paris, give lessons at St. Denis.

It is interesting to read the letter of Napoleon, setting forth his ideas on the instruction to be given to the daughters of the Legion of Honour, and in several matters his orders are still carried out, though in others, the schools having kept pace with the times, they are now disregarded. "On no account must they be taught Latin or any other foreign language," wrote Napoleon, yet now both English and German are learnt by the children, four of the most advanced pupils being sent to Austria to perfect themselves in the language in a similar establishment, whence come four Austrian officers' daughters to improve their French at St. Denis. Repeated attempts have been made to bring about an exchange of pupils with an English school, but have hitherto been unsuccessful.

"I will allow music to be taught, but it must be only vocal," is another of the Emperor's decisions, to which little heed is paid at present, as his ghost would realise were it to walk in the room at St. Denis, where no less than fifty-seven pianos are assembled, and the truly awful cacophony produced by all these instruments when some fifty pupils are practising simultaneously, would convince him more than ever of the wisdom of his restriction. The girls themselves are quite accustomed to the din, and declare that they are in no wise disturbed by "the concord of sweet sounds" given forth by the surrounding pianos; nevertheless the most promising pupils are favoured with the undivided possession of a room in which to pursue their musical studies. However vocal music is by no means neglected, and the members of the singing-class acquit themselves very creditably at the various concerts given at the school, and render great services in chapel.

"Dancing is necessary to the health of the pupils," also wrote the Emperor,



INTERIOR COURT, PUPILS' WALK

and they quite agree with him there, and still keenly enjoy a dance. There are certain occasions on which they may look forward with certainty to having this pleasure. On July 14th, the national *fête*-day, on November 25th, the day of St. Catherine, the patron saint of girls, and on *Mardi Gras* (Shrove Tuesday). On this last occasion the enjoyment of dancing is heightened by the delight of dressing up, and they themselves design and carry out their fancy dresses. There is no display of bright-hued silks and satins, of delicate lace and flashing jewels—one franc fifty centimes is all each girl is allowed for her costume, and it is not within the bounds of possibility to compass much magnificence with that sum; yet it is wonderful what can be achieved with patience and ingenuity, and the carnival ball is a very pretty sight. Another opportunity for having a good dance was afforded them by the late President, when some few years ago, after having visited the establishment, he invited them to the garden party at the Elysée. Every summer this invitation was repeated, and the girls in their plain uniforms—black stockings and white thread :loves being the only concession made to girlish vanity on this great day—mingled with the fashionable throng in the garden of the palace, and danced with the pupils of the military academy of St. Cyr, who are also included among the guests. To go to the Elysée was the reward to the girls with a clean record, and when they heard that President Loubet intended to follow his lamented predecessor's example, there was much rejoicing at the Legion of Honour.

In his memorable letter the founder also gave it to be understood that the girls were to make their bread, and though not to attend to the cooking, could be shown how to prepare some sweet dishes. At present the daily bread is provided by the baker, but there is still a class for cookery, and in the roomy kitchen, where a meal could be cooked in the huge cauldrons for a family of giants, the pupils are initiated into the mysteries of the culinary art.

"They must make their own chemises, stockings, dresses, and head-dresses."

This was another of Napoleon's commands, and even now, after the lapse of nearly a century, great pains are still taken to make the girls good needlewomen. There is a special fund to provide them with materials for making with their own hands a *trousseau* to be taken home on leaving school, which encourages them to be industrious, and is most useful to many of the girls.

It will thus be seen that their studies are agreeably diversified; they are also interspersed with time for exercise and recreation. With the exception of the elder girls, who are sometimes taken to a picture gallery or museum, with a mistress to act as their "guide, philosopher, and friend," or to an afternoon performance at the Opera Comique or Comédie Française, the pupils never leave the precincts of St. Denis. This rule is strictly adhered to, and even the children whose parents reside in the town of St. Denis itself may not visit their homes during the term, or go out walking with their friends. However, they are by no means deprived of air or out-door exercise, for the large courtyards and beautiful shady park afford facilities for enjoying both. Neither are they quite cut off from intercourse with their families, for the holidays—ten days at the New Year, three weeks at Easter, and two months and a-half in the summer—afford them an opportunity for renewing home ties. Besides, when they return to school—the railway companies, by the way, only charge half-price for the daughters of the Legion of Honour—they can receive duly authorised visitors on Sunday and Thursday afternoons. And a very charming and animated scene do we find in the "parloir" on those days: here we see mamma come to introduce the last new baby to the big sister; there an officer just home from the colonies, having his first interview with his child after his long absence; a little further a wearer of green ribbons not quite accustomed to school life is clinging tearfully to her mother, while others are gaily telling their school experiences to sympathetic hearers or listening eagerly to the news from home. But before a servant is dispatched to fetch each girl, the *Chancelier's* permission to

see her must be shown to the lady in charge of the "parloir." In years gone by a grating separated the girls from their visitors, and to kiss them through this grating was a feat most difficult to accomplish, but that is a thing of the past, and the pleasure of seeing their relatives and friends is granted them much more frequently than in former times. The discipline is certainly severe at St. Denis, yet I have always been struck by the bright, happy faces of the girls; and when they leave

the old house that sheltered their girlhood, there is generally much shedding of tears. Later on in life they realise the great pains taken there to comply with the founder's desire as expressed in his memorable letter: "I wish to make useful women of these young girls, for if useful, they are sure to be agreeable," and it is thanks to the education received there if they develop into what Madame Campan, the first *surintendante*, wished them all to be—"good housewives and excellent mothers."



TWILIGHT VOICES



ALTHOUGH I sit beside a hearth
From which your form has gone,
To travel o'er a distant path,
Yet I am not alone;
For, when the twilight round me falls,
A Shade beside me stands,
From out the gloom a whisper calls—
I see your beckoning hands.

And so, I still hold commune sweet
With you who've gone before,
For, every night, you come to greet
Me from the phantom shore;
But, with the dawn of breaking day,
The Voice is still again,
The shadowy Spirit glides away,
And I must call in vain!

HORACE WYNDHAM.



WRITTEN BY HERBERT J. ESSEX. ILLUSTRATED BY J. E. GILLINGWATER



SUFFER from sleeplessness, and have acquired the habit of walking out in the middle of the night instead of lying tossing on my bed in a vain endeavour to sleep.

One night I left my chambers in Gray's Inn about midnight, and strolled along Holborn. I turned down one of the narrow streets that lead from that thoroughfare to Lincoln's Inn Fields, and being of rather an absent turn of mind stopped still in a dark corner to follow out some train of thought that had occurred to me.

Suddenly my attention was roused by the sound of stealthy footsteps close to me. The place where I was standing was immediately opposite the door of a house marked No. 16a, and I was surprised to see the figure of a man suddenly emerge from the dark side of the street on which I was, cross over to the other side, which was faintly lit by the rays of a gas-lamp situated some distance away, and after gazing suspiciously around him, push open the door of this house and disappear, pulling the door to after him, but not shutting it.

"A curious thing," I thought, "for the door of a house to stand open at this time of night, and for a man to enter in this mysterious manner, and I fell to wondering what the thing meant. I

had come to no conclusion, when, for the second time, the sound of stealthy footsteps broke upon my ear, and, after a little interval, another figure emerged from the gloom, this time from the opposite direction, and disappeared in the same manner into the house, leaving the door slightly open, as the first had done.

My curiosity was now thoroughly aroused. I gazed at the house. It was a tall, dark-looking structure, and looked eminently respectable. I could see brass plates on each side of the door announcing that various firms had their offices within. It was not at all the kind of place in which a night club would take up its abode, and yet people who entered houses in this secretive manner were certainly not bent on any legitimate errand.

I was engaged in these reflections when, for the third time, footsteps became audible; the same performance was repeated; and a third man disappeared within the gloomy passage, from which no light shone on the opening of the door.

In the course of my nightly wanderings about London I had seen many curious things, but never anything so interesting as this. I made up my mind at once not to lose the chance of taking part in what might prove a singular adventure,



"AFTER GAZING SUSPICIOUSLY AROUND HIM, PUSH OPEN THE DOOR OF THIS HOUSE, AND DISAPPEAR"

and in a moment I crossed the street, pushed open the door, which I left ajar as the others had done, and entered the house. An absolute silence prevailed inside, and it was completely dark except for a thin ray of light from the lamp outside that came in through the crack of the open door. By the aid of this I could see that a flight of stairs ran up opposite the door, and that on the left of the staircase was a passage from which the doors of what looked like offices opened out. I gently tried the handle of one of these doors and found it locked.

Whatever the three men had come in to do, they were evidently on one of the upper floors, and I was just going to mount the staircase when I saw the front door slowly open. I hastily retreated to the passage, where, from the shadow, I saw a fourth man enter

and go upstairs, treading with the utmost caution. I hastily slipped off my shoes and followed him. He had a dark lantern with him, and its faint light gave enough illumination to enable us to see our way up the stairs. He passed the first, and reached the second landing, treading with cat-like steps, and I followed him as closely as I dared. At the second landing he paused and looked behind him, and I shrank back round the corner of the staircase. Fortunately, he did not observe me, and commenced to ascend the third flight, which led to the topmost floor of the house.

I followed as fast as I could, and just reached the top in time to see him enter a room, the door of which was standing open, but which was shrouded, like the rest of the house, in complete darkness. I saw, however, by the gleam of the lantern that the three men whom I had seen enter the house were sitting at a table. A voice said "Rome," another voice answered with the words "Number four," and the man seated himself at the table, shut the slide of his lantern, and the room was again completely dark.

The momentary glimpse of the room which I had had, showed me that in the corner opposite to that into which the door opened was a large old-fashioned sofa, standing out rather from the wall, and well away from the table. I was so interested in what I had seen that I resolved to follow up the adventure, and feeling my way quietly along the wall, I had soon safely ensconced myself behind the broad back of the couch. I had hardly done so when the light from another lantern became visible on the staircase, and, after a short interval, a fifth man entered and took his seat at the table. As he came in he gave the password "Stockholm," and was answered with the words "Number five."

At short intervals six others followed, each giving the name of the town to which, I presumed, he belonged, and each being answered with his number. Then there was an interval of what seemed like some minutes, and then an electric light was suddenly switched on for an instant, and I saw, to my amazement, that the chair at the head of the table, which had up to now been vacant,

was occupied by a twelfth man, who must have crept silently into the room in the darkness. There was a rustling as the other eleven rose slightly in their chairs, and I heard them murmur, "The President," and then the light was suddenly switched off again. But the momentary glimpse of the man that I had had was enough to give me an impression of horror. I had seen a long lean body, crowned with a face of deadly pallor, in which a pair of light eyes moved restlessly under their red lashes, and fringing the face was a thin hedge of light red hair.

And then began a time to which I always look back as the most nerve-shaking I have ever experienced.

There sat the twelve men in absolute silence and complete darkness, while a clock on the mantelpiece slowly ticked away the minutes. Not a word of any kind was spoken, and there was hardly a movement, except the slight rustling that occurred when a man changed his position on his chair.

They were waiting then, but for what? The stillness appalled me. I longed for any sound to break the silence that I knew was but a prelude to some deed of horror. I knew that these mysterious men were waiting for *some one else*, and that their presence boded no good to him, whoever he might be. My own position, too, was of no slight peril. If I were to be discovered I realised that my life would not be worth a moment's purchase. I thought of quietly escaping, but the interest of the situation held me fascinated, and I crouched down again in my uncomfortable position.

And so the interminable minutes went on until, at last, a sound broke the stillness.

A loud noise came from below, as of some one shutting the heavy outside door, and the footsteps of a man climbing the stairs became audible. He came up slowly, humming a tune at the same time, and beating time with his stick on the staircase wall, utterly unconscious of what awaited him in his room. I heard him reach the first landing, and begin to ascend the second flight. "Go back," I muttered to myself, as if he could hear me; "death is waiting for you in your room."

He began to climb the third flight. I could hear the rustling again as each man straightened himself in his chair. Two men moved towards the door. I tried to shout, to give a cry of warning, trusting to making my escape in the confusion, but the words stuck in my throat, and in another moment he was in the room, and it was too late.

I heard the key of the door turn in lock. There was a slight scuffle, a cry of surprise and terror, and the room became suddenly a blaze of light.

The new comer was an Englishman, about thirty-five years old, and ordinarily good-looking, and he stood between two men at one end of the table, facing the President, who looked at him with an expression of triumphant hate gleaming out of his cold eyes.

He bore himself with courage, though the colour of his face was of an ashy greyness, as he realised the hands into which he had fallen.

The President spoke in a thin, rasping voice, and with a foreign accent:—

"Reginald Causton," he said, "you are standing in the presence of the central committee of the Holy Brotherhood, whose oath you are accused of violating. Five years ago you were summoned before us in Paris, and neglected to appear. We have, therefore, been obliged to seek you out, and, by the aid of a clerk in the office downstairs, who was not averse from earning a little money, and left the front door open for us, we were enabled to meet here to-night.

"I ask you, in the name of the committee, whether you have any defence to make for the crime of which you are accused?"

The accused man was silent.

The President turned to the other members: "You see, gentlemen," he said, "he has no defence to offer." Then he addressed the prisoner again: "You know our rules," he said.

"Yes, Pierre Lamotte," broke out the other, "I know too well your accursed rules that bind men with oaths of which they do not know the meaning, and then when they cannot keep them, punish them with death. . . . Listen, gentlemen," he cried, turning to the other conspirators, "I know that the

penalty for breaking the oath to the Brotherhood is death, and that the offer of allowing a man who has done so to defend himself is a mere farce; but, before I die, I wish to show some justification for what I did. I was affiliated to the Brotherhood when I was a mere boy, by my father, who had suffered every imaginable wrong from the Russian Government, and had become a fanatic for revenge. I cared not much for these things, but at twenty-five, I took the oath to please him, not knowing the servitude to which I was binding myself. Soon afterwards I fell in love with a girl in Paris, and this man," (he pointed with a glance of hate at the President,) "happened to covet her. He persecuted her with his loathsome attentions, and one day I caught him annoying her, and had to correct him." He smiled slightly at the recollection as if it pleased him, and I saw the President shoot a sinister glance at him from under his light eyelashes.

"Soon afterwards," continued Causton, "he was elected President, and from that day forward he persecuted me. Whatever difficult or dangerous service was to be done, the choice of the committee always seemed to fall upon me. I was sent away from Paris continually, and at last I was appointed to this service in Italy, which meant certain death, for I was to assassinate the Duke of A—. Gentlemen, I was in despair, but I respected my oath, and started on my journey; but when I arrived in Rome, I found a frantic letter awaiting me from my betrothed, saying that directly I had left Paris this villain," (and he pointed again at Lamotte,) "had renewed his persecutions. I broke my oath, and returned secretly to Paris. I made arrangements that my betrothed should be placed in a position of safety, where, thank God, she is now, and which this devil does not know. Since then, I have been living in London, trying to make enough to enable me to marry her. We were to have been married next month" (I detected a slight tremor in his voice as he spoke), "but you have found me out, and that dream is over.

"That is my story, gentlemen, and now do what you have to do as quickly

as possible. I judge that you are anxious to be gone, and a condemned man is no stickler for formalities."

He paused, and his pale face became set again as he waited for the verdict.

The voice of the President broke the silence, high and thin, like the note of a badly-played violin:

"You have heard the prisoner's defence, gentlemen," he said, "and that he does not deny the breaking of his oath. His lies about myself" (his voice became shriller and his pale eyes glittered,) "I can afford to disregard. I ask you, Johann Strakosch" (he turned to a man beside him,) "as senior on the central committee, what is your verdict?"

"Death!" answered the other.

The President went down the list, and each man gave the same answer.

Pierre Lamotte smiled evilly, and turned to the prisoner:

"Reginald Causton," he said, "you are condemned by the central committee of the Brotherhood to death. It now remains for the manner of your death to be decided on." He turned to the other members of the committee: "Shall it be the usual manner," he asked.

Each man assented.

"Bind the condemned!" said Lamotte.

In a moment the two men posted near the door seized the unfortunate victim and bound him securely to the table, leaving, however, his right arm free, but arranging the knots of the rope in such a way that it was impossible for him to unloose them.

I looked at his face: the agony of death was upon it; and great drops of cold sweat stood out upon his brow.

When he was fastened securely, the President addressed his companions:

"Gentlemen," he said, "in the name of the Sacred Brotherhood, I thank you for your attendance here to-night to do an act of justice. Your further services will not be required. I take upon myself the final duty, and you can depend upon my arranging everything so that not even the slightest breath of suspicion will be aroused. I have the honour to wish you severally good journeys to your homes," and he bowed.

The other members of the committee bowed in return, and the man addressed as Johann Strakosch, immediately went out. After an interval another followed, and so on, till Lamotte was left alone with his victim.

He turned a malignant glance upon him and laughed, with a sinister look in his eyes that made my blood boil. Then he lit a cigarette. At last he spoke.

"It was foolish of you to tell that little story, my friend," he said. "You cause me to remind myself of what I owe you, and for a man in your position that is foolish. You see we are alone here, and the window of the room you chose to live in looks out on nothing but warehouses, which are all empty, so that no one would hear you if you were to shout for help. And perhaps I may have to cause you to call out a little. You struck me once in Paris—*me!* holy God! and with a cane; and besides, you have a secret that I want, and a man who has a secret should not live in a room where screams cannot be heard."

His pale eyes gleamed; and under his bantering words I felt there lay a concentrated ferocity that boded ill for his victim. I felt in my pocket for my clasp-knife, opened it and stretched my cramped limbs in order to be ready for the struggle that I knew was coming.

Lamotte drew a small bottle from his pocket. "The Brotherhood dislikes the unnecessary shedding of blood," he said with a sneer, "so they allow those who are under the ban of their justice to end their own lives. You will observe that your right hand is free. That is done that you may drink the contents of this bottle of your own free will, and die with it in your hand. It looks more natural." And he laughed again, and snapped his fingers in the other's face. "Animal," he cried, "you once struck Pierre Lamotte, but now you are going to pay the price for it."

The condemned man stretched out his hand for the bottle. "Give it me," he cried hoarsely, "and let me make an end."

The President drew back. "Not yet," he answered. "You remember that there is a little matter of a secret. You are going to tell me the name of the

place where Mademoiselle is hidden so safely."

The other's eyes flashed defiance. "By heavens, no!" he said. "I would rather die a hundred deaths than tell you."

Lamotte laughed, and drew a long wax taper from his pocket and lighted it with a match. "You will do more than that, my friend," he answered, "because a man might die a hundred times, and yet not suffer so much as you will if you do not tell me. But I give you another chance. You will be dead, you know, and Mademoiselle—she will console herself with me." He poised the taper in the air.

"I will never tell you," said Causton.

"Pig!" returned the Frenchman, his mood changing again to ferocity. "Let us understand one another. We are alone here, and you have the misfortune to be bound. Supposing I were to—" He advanced close to his victim, and his voice sank to a hissing whisper.

I saw a shudder run through Causton's frame. "You devil," he said, "you could never"—and he broke off with a groan. "God help me!" I heard him say.

"I had the honour to ask you the name of the place where your betrothed is hidden," repeated the President.

No answer came.

"You are obstinate, my friend; and I shall have to try some preliminary measures. It is a pity, because you will speak before you die. With these words the Frenchman walked stealthily round the table till he was behind his victim, and well out of reach of his free arm. Causton, with an agony of fear in his eyes, tried to follow his movements by turning his head, but with devilish malignity he placed himself so that the other could not see him. Then I saw him crouch forward on the table, the red fringe standing round his face like the unclean hair of some animal, and deliberately apply the lighted taper to the side of Causton's face.

With a dreadful shriek, the latter struggled a pace or two, pulling the heavy table with him.

I heard the malignant laugh of the Frenchman. "You will speak directly, my friend," he said, "if a little pain is

so disagreeable to you. Perhaps you will save further trouble by doing so now. I can make it more painful than that," and he flourished the taper in Causton's face.

The bound man set his teeth. "Never!" he said, "you dog!"

By this time I could stand it no longer, and was creeping from my hiding place.

The Frenchman's back was towards

too short, however, and lay on the table, an inch or two out of his reach.

I am a fairly strong man, but I found my match in the Frenchman. Round the room we struggled, each trying to get the other down. He wound his long arms round me, and wrestled with the ferocity of a tiger; and after a time I found that he was slowly pushing me backwards towards the knife. His greedy eyes were fixed upon it as it lay



"'NEVER!' HE SAID, 'YOU DOG!'"

me as he prepared to do his devilish work the second time. Causton shuddered and gave an involuntary groan, and then he saw me and uttered a cry of surprise.

Lamotte followed the direction of his eyes and turned suddenly, but I was upon him in an instant, trying at the same time to throw my knife within reach of Causton's free hand. It fell

open upon the table, and I knew that if once he got possession of it, both I and Causton were lost. Slowly and slowly I lost ground, while the bound man watched the conflict with agonised eyes. My limbs were stiff from the cramped position in which I had been for so long, and I felt that it was merely a matter of a few moments' time, and the knife would be in the Frenchman's posses-

sion. I resolved to make one final attempt. We were now very near the table. With a superhuman effort I pulled him sideways a short distance, shouting to Causton at the same time to seize him with his unoccupied hand. He was just able to do so, and caught him by the collar. Nearly throttled by the grasp, Lamotte relaxed his hold for an instant, and in that moment the knife was mine. I handed it to Causton, who let go his grasp as I renewed the struggle with Lamotte. It did not take him long to cut the rope, and come to my assistance. With yells and curses the Frenchman still struggled like a demon, but the two of us were too much for him; and at last we got him under, and he fell back, striking his head against the corner of the table, and becoming insensible.

"Good God!" I said, as we bent over his evil face as he lay upon the floor, "have we killed him?"

Causton listened a moment, and then spurned the man's body with his foot. "No," he said, "such carrion is not so easily disposed of. He is merely stunned."

After a short consultation we decided to bind him, and then leave him where he was, and let the police make the best they could of the mystery when they found him the next morning. So when Causton had collected a few necessary papers we left him, bundled in a heap upon the floor and breathing stertorously.

We reached my chambers without

further adventure, and we had no sooner got inside my sitting-room than Causton broke down under the strain he had endured, and fainted dead away in my arm-chair. He soon recovered, however, and left me in two hours' time to make his escape both from the members of the Brotherhood and the enquiries of the police.

But he need not have done so, for when the police found the President next morning they recognised him as a man for whom their friends in Paris had long been in search, and he was extradited. A month afterwards I learned that he had saved his own skin by betraying his comrades, and that by his means a band of Anarchists that had long defied the police was broken up.

Lamotte himself was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude in a French convict settlement, and I felt no pity for him when I heard it.

Causton has married the lady of his choice, and lives in America. He writes to me sometimes. The police never found him, nor solved the mystery of the house in the Holborn street where an Anarchist was discovered bound with a cord, in the room of a journalist, who had disappeared and never came back again. It remained an unsolved problem, the solution of which, I believe, to this day remains only in the hands of Causton, his wife, myself, and the man who, if still alive, is enduring a living death in the pestilential climate of Cayenne.



The Monks of Mount Melleray

WRITTEN BY ARTHUR J. IRELAND. ILLUSTRATED BY PHOTOGRAPHS

THE history of Monasticism is a life study; it traces the evolution of the Church by those slow steps which have given us, by a series of deviations, every branch of the Christian Faith. It would, of course, be impossible to compress into a short article even the substance of these changes without attempting to explain the motives to which they have been due; therefore, I shall merely give an account of the life in a monastery of the strictest order of the Church of Rome, which is to-day very much like the life of the monks in ages long past. Years and seasons make little, if any, change within the walls of religious houses. Men are born, they flourish, and they die: the outside world strives, suffers, and rejoices, but the son or daughter of the Church, who chooses to give up all for the sake of the religion that is their life, passes like a shadow through the land unruffled by—almost unconscious of—the changes without. Not that the life of the recluse has been always smooth and peaceful: one has only to read the accounts of monastic persecution to see how much these men and women have had the courage to endure for their faith. Yet, in spite of torture and tribulation, the convents have survived; and it is only necessary to allow the imagination to play its part when one steps into the quiet, sparsely-furnished religious houses of to-day in order to enter into the life of men who lived centuries ago.

Historical knowledge grows rusty very rapidly, so I think I may be permitted to briefly recall the origin of the Cistercian Order—to a branch of which

the Monks of Mount Melleray belong—before proceeding to describe the Mount Melleray Monastery in detail. The Cistercians, then, seceded from the Benedictines in the twelfth century, and under their leader, one Stephen Hardinge, an Englishman, tried to restore the strict living of old-time Monasticism. Their home was at Cîteaux, in France, and in a short time their influence spread far and wide—being received with ecstasy by religious enthusiasts. Later, in the fourteenth, a further secession took place—this time from the newly-founded Cistercians. It was headed by two very devout men, Saint Bernard and Saint Bruno, who sought to purify their souls by even greater exactions than those of the Cistercian order. This new Order—or rather branch, as it is properly called—took the name of La Trappe, and having instituted a *régime* of appalling austerity, earned a reputation for self-sacrifice which has never been equalled in the history of monastic life. The monks lived in absolute solitude—but, as the description of the Monks at Mount Melleray, who are Trappists, will contain the details of their life, I need not dwell upon the matter here.

The Trappist monasteries were generally in isolated, mountainous, or almost inaccessible districts, but the monks worked on the land, brought it under cultivation, and engaged in charitable enterprises which made them respected, while the severity of their lives made them the objects of almost superstitious fear. Examples of the old Cistercian monasteries, the parent Order of La Trappe, just as the Benedictines were the parent Order of the Cistercians,

may be seen at Fountains, Tintern, and Furness, in England. These all flourished before the Tudor dissolution of monasteries took place, and probably possessed great wealth, whereas the latter-day convents are, as a rule, in rather straitened circumstances. This brief summary is only meant to recall the principal incidents in the transition of the monasteries, and to pave the way for the coming of the settlement at Mount Melleray, so that the growth of the branch may be better understood when its history is known.

There was not much paving of the way for the weary band of exiled fathers who came to Ireland from France sixty-nine years ago. They had been expelled from their Abbey by the Revolution of 1830, and, not knowing whither to turn, this destitute band of foreigners had crossed to Ireland, the ancient home of holy learning, and made their way up the River Blackwater to Cappoquin, where they sought the aid of Sir Richard Keane, the chief landowner of the district, in establishing an Abbey. Their supplication was listened to by Sir Richard, who granted them the mountain tract of land at the foot of Mount Melleray, a peak of the Knockmeledown Mountains, for a nominal sum. The area of the grant was about seven hundred acres, composed of mountain land, and was, up to the time of occupation, uncultivated heath land—stony, difficult to work, almost sterile. Nevertheless the grateful monks received the gift—for such in truth it was—joyfully; and, true to the traditions of their Order, set about transforming the outlying waste into a prosperous farm, and did not shrink from the most trying labours.

They quarried the stone required for building purposes on their newly-acquired land, and erected their monastery with their own hands. The united labour of these earnest men soon converted chaos into cosmos, and by the sweat of their brow and the work of their hands they have established a thriving settlement on the lower slopes of the Knockmeledowns. Everything that was wanted from without, whether for the completion of the Abbey or the tilling of the ground, was carried by

the fathers, without the assistance of beast labour, from Cappoquin, which is about three and a-half miles distant. Even the manure for the ground was carried on their backs in baskets over the rough roads that then existed. Thus it will be apparent to all that the task of cultivation was, at the outset, one of extreme difficulty. Undaunted by these obstacles, however, the monks toiled on; with the result that, now, smiling meadows and cornfields have taken the place of the heath-clad wastes of the mountain side.

Very, very few of the original settlers are now alive. The majority, having done their day's work, lie asleep—as the monks express it—beneath the plain wooden crosses in the little cemetery. A new generation has arisen, composed chiefly of Irishmen, to carry on the work with ceaseless energy, and no less earnest than the preceding one. They are men who do not fear to suffer for their convictions, and who, therefore, demand the respect of all—even of those who do not approve of their methods.

The Order of La Trappe imposes very severe restrictions upon its votaries. An abstemious life in every sense is the primary rule; and self-sacrifice is the motive of every action. Eternal silence is the characteristic by which this austere brotherhood is best known to the world; and incessant prayer is another which forms the greatest principle of the Trappists' lives. The work which occupies the monks necessitates a relaxation of the rule of silence on certain occasions. Thus, for example, the members engaged in the schools and those who are told off to receive visitors are exempt from the mandate as long as their duties make conversation necessary. Directly, however, the task is finished the teachers and the Master of the Ceremonies once more relapse into silence. For other special reasons a dispensation enabling a member to speak may be granted; but no monk will lightly make a request for such a dispensation, since severe penances are inflicted afterwards, in order to undo the damage that has been done by the communications with the outside world.

There is something particularly

pathetic in the sight of all the silent, lonely figures that one sees moving about the cloisters in their white habits, communing with the heavens. It is the custom to raise your hat as you pass, and they return the salute by a grave inclination of their heads. This is done more from habit than in acknowledgment of your salutation, for their eyes remain fixed upon the ground or turned upwards, so that they can scarcely be aware of any bow on the visitor's part, and they simply return the greeting that they have learnt to expect, without

dispensing of hospitality they are absolutely free from bigotry—difference of creed has no power to cool the welcome the visitor receives. And whether one wishes to make any return for what one receives or not, is left entirely in the hands of the individual.

It is a rule of the House that no visitor shall stay longer than three weeks; but one day's intermission at the end of a visit is sufficient to entitle the stranger to return for another three weeks. No charge is made for all this, and no gratuity is demanded; but, of course,



THE DORMITORY

wishing to ascertain whether it was accorded. Their living is very simple. They neither eat meat nor drink wine, but their hospitable tenets, allow them to supply these things for the use of their guests. They are content to eat bread, fish—only on certain days—vegetables, fruit and butter, and to drink milk or water—for tea, coffee and cocoa fall under the head of stimulants—while the visitors may have anything they care to ask for, provided it is in the monastery. They are most hospitable; and in the

few leave without expressing their thanks in a tangible form. There was a notable instance of the admiration inspired by the monks a few years ago. A Church of England priest visited the monastery on two occasions, and spent the full time allowed by the Order each time. After his second visit, he sent a very handsome donation, which has founded new charities in the neighbourhood, as a token of his esteem.

The rules as to rising and sleeping are most severe; and I think that even

the veriest sceptic must be convinced that men who act up to their principles so thoroughly, year in, year out, in winter, and summer, are themselves convinced of the efficacy of their calling. This is briefly the diary of a day:—At two o'clock in the morning, on week-days, the monks leave the cheerless dormitory in which they sleep in the tiny cubicles, on plank beds, and begin their day's round with prayer. On Sundays and holy-days the hour of rising is one instead of two, and there are extra prayers. In fact, the whole day is devoted to religious thoughts, if not to prayer, even while the outside duties are being performed. Meals occupy a very small portion of the day; the remainder being spent in attending to the necessities of the young, the sick, and the aged, tilling the land, and generally looking after the farm, live stock and fields. At eight o'clock in the evening the monks retire to rest; and so the days go on. "In the lovely summer evenings," said the father who conducted me over the monastery, "when the sun is setting and everything looks beautiful, when you men of the

world are enjoying yourselves, it is sometimes hard to go to bed."

This brings me to my own impressions, gathered during a too short stay at Mount Melleray; which, however, I mean to repeat, in acceptance of the kind invitation received.

To reach the monastery from Cappoquin entails a walk of about three and a-half miles, or the journey can be made by car. I chose to walk; and a hot, dusty walk it was, along a white, glaring road, little protected from the sun. The last part of the walk may be made across heather-covered moor, where the ground is very rough, so that one enters the shade of the avenue leading to the door of the guest-house with feelings of relief.

In front of the door there is a gravel sweep, on the left a high wall enclosing the cemetery, the chapel and school-house; on the right the farm buildings, where a large quantity of hay and straw, the products of the monastery lands, is stored; and behind the guest-house is the part of the building inhabited by the monks. The whole effect of the pile, as one approaches, is



THE CEMETERY



THE LIBRARY

grave. The gray walls, the lofty spire of the chapel, the brown-habited figures of the brothers, all help to enhance the solemnity of this truly religious house, in its mountainous surroundings. And when the threshold is crossed one feels that one has stepped into another world—the world of centuries ago.

I was very kindly received by one of the brothers, who took me all over the place, and did not forget to care for my creature comforts. Everything is silent; and my footsteps sounded ominously loud on the naked stone floors of the passage, while my guide walked with a shuffling step, developed from the habit of wearing low-cut shoes. The library and the chapter-house are the two most luxurious apartments in the monastery, for one cannot include the guest-rooms, which are made comfortable for the use of visitors. But it is not until the dormitory and the cells are reached that a true idea of the severity of the life is gained. The dormitory I have already described; and the cells present no article calculated to make the monks forget their duties. They are simple and

austere in the extreme, containing a solitary wooden chair, a faldstool, a table, a few books borrowed from the library for immediate study, and a small font of holy water.

The chapel is divided into two parts—the secular and the clerical—separated by a screen of carved oak. Mass is held there every day for the people; and the monks spend much of their time in the stalls in silent prayer. It is an impressive sight, but one that is too sacred to write lightly about—for it must be remembered that this is their life and their religion; and, whether they are mistaken or not in their views, I am convinced that they are thoroughly in earnest in their work.

Beyond the buildings lies the garden, well-cared for, and brought to a state of high cultivation by the hands of the monks; and a little to the right of the farmyard is the lake from which the fish are taken for feast days. Everything that I saw interested me; it was all so strange, so solemn, such an anachronism at the close of the nineteenth century.

My guide was most affable, and I ventured to ask him a few questions which might seem impertinent; but he answered them freely.

"I have been forty-five years here," he said in answer to my question; "and there are a good many who have been longer."

"Do you ever regret the world?" I inquired.

"No," he said; "but do not think that monastery walls exclude temptation. We have just the same cravings as you men of the world. And we need prayers, as do all men."

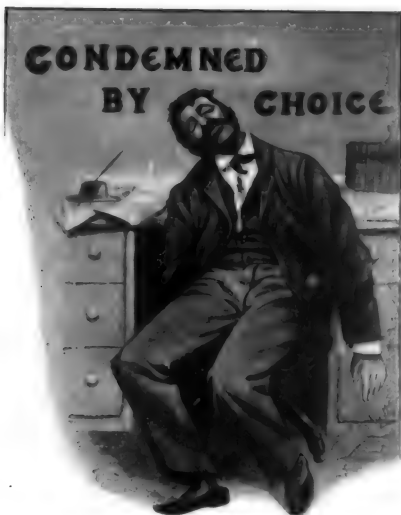
My short stay was a pleasant one, and before I left I had grown more than interested in the life around me. As I walked along the dusty road on my way back to Cappoquin, I clambered on to the fern-covered wall at the side of the road, from which a last glimpse of the monastery could be obtained, before turning a corner that would shut off my view. I looked long, and felt that what I had seen must be a dream, it was so strange; and, remembering what the brother had said to me,

I uttered my benediction on the home of the hard-working, austere men to whom I felt so drawn, even in my short acquaintance.

A few steps more, and Mount Mellera was hidden from my eyes; not for ever, I hope, for there is a deal to be learnt there, and I shall try to see the friendly, hospitable monks again. I had not gone far before I met a stream of cars driving out to the monastery, laden with holiday-makers from Youghal, Cork, and other places from which excursions are run to the lovely Blackwater. They were all anxious to see the famous Order at home, and they would all receive the hospitality of the monks, as many thousands have done already, and as many thousands will do in the future—given with open-handed generosity, no matter whence the stranger comes, or who he is.

Thus these men live their simple life, and die their simple death, ministering to the poor, teaching the young, showing kindness to all. And who shall say that they fail to do good?





WRITTEN BY FRANK STANHOPE. ILLUSTRATED BY SPENCER BLYTH

MY friend Henderson had been chief resident Medical Officer at the E— Lunatic Asylum for about two years when I accepted his invitation to run down, and spend a few hours with him. I shouldn't have gone then, perhaps, but Henderson wrote urging me, alleging as an additional inducement that the inmates were having a dance in the evening, to which festive function I should be warmly welcomed.

Now I've danced with girls whose inane and vapid rejoinders to my well-meant efforts to start a conversation would seem to suggest a certain amount of idiocy; but never with a properly

labelled "professional idiot." The temptation was irresistible. I went to E—, arriving there in the afternoon, intending to devote the intervening time to an inspection of the institution.

Under the pilotage of Henderson, I made the tour of the asylum, and was much impressed with the melancholy associations of the place. It saddened me more than a visit I once paid to a home for incurables.

"The patients you have just seen," observed Henderson, as we reached the end of a long and lofty stone corridor, "are what we rather slangily call the 'middles.' That is, they come between the perfectly harmless inmates and the really dangerous. Now we come to the

latter—the worst cases—those with homicidal or suicidal mania.”

Henderson opened a door as he spoke, and descending a narrow stone staircase, led the way to that quarter of the asylum which sheltered the most unfortunate of all the inmates of that sombre building.

To be candid, I was not sorry when it was over. Henderson evidently read my thoughts.

“Never mind, Barnton,” he said; “I can promise you the evening will partly obliterate your painful impressions of E—. By-the-bye, I hope you’re a good dancer. Some of our young ladies are veritable Terpsichores.”

I smiled at my friend’s playful remarks, which I knew were meant to divert my thoughts from the dismal sight we had just seen; but, in spite of that, I could not rid my mind of the images of the wretched men and women we were leaving behind. One case in particular, that of a tall, dark man, apparently in the thirties, one of the last we had visited, impressed me most painfully. I spoke of him to Henderson, when we had reached the cheery little sitting-room, which was the doctor’s sanctum.

“I never saw a more awful look in a man’s eye than in his,” I said with a shudder. “Is he very violent?”

I thought I noticed a troubled look on Henderson’s face, as though the subject were distasteful to him.

“Periodically,” he said, “he breaks out into frightful paroxysms, and requires considerable attention. At other times he is comparatively quiet and docile, but very melancholy.”

“Has he been here long?”

“Nearly two years. He came about a month after I was appointed.”

“Do you know the particulars of his case?” I enquired. “What drove him to this place?”

“Conscience,” said Henderson, gravely.

A moment later he seemed as though he would have recalled his answer.

“Conscience?” I repeated vaguely.

“Yes; but don’t let us pursue the subject, Barnton. I didn’t ask you down here to give you the ‘blues.’”

“Pooh!” I returned. “I didn’t come

here expecting to find the gaiety of a circus or music-hall. The very stones of the place suggest gloom and misery.”

Henderson half smiled.

“That’s no reason I should harrow your feelings by a recital of all the woes of the place.”

I said no more; but, to speak the truth, I was just a little piqued at my friend’s attitude. He must have seen it, for he rose to his feet, and stood in front of my chair.

“Look here, Barnton!” he said, “I’m afraid you’re a bit offended—or shall I say perplexed—at my unwillingness to speak of the case that has so interested you?”

“Not at all, my dear fellow,” I said, annoyed with myself for having disguised my feelings so ill. “Perhaps the subject is a painful one to you?”

“That’s exactly it, Barnton; the subject is a painful one to me.”

I glanced up at Henderson in some surprise. I had made the remark perhaps a trifle maliciously, never expecting there was any truth in the suggestion of personal feeling. Still he spoke quite soberly. There was not the slightest hint of satire or badinage. There was even gravity in his manner.

“I’m sorry I asked any questions, old man,” I said. “Still, I could hardly guess—”

Henderson interrupted me.

“I fear you will carry away a wrong impression of the matter, Barnton. I have no personal interest in the man—at least, not in the way you may think. He was a perfect stranger to me when he was admitted; and, until a week ago, I thought no more of his case than that of any one of my patients. He interested me professionally, that was all. But last week something happened that has completely changed my position with regard to him. To tell you the truth, Barnton,”—Henderson spoke hurriedly, and instinctively lowered his voice—“to tell you the truth, I have been much worried lately over that very man. I have been placed in a most awkward position.”

He paused, and drew up a chair close to mine. I filled up the interval with an observation:

“I’m glad you speak in the past tense,”

I said. "Your difficulty is, I presume, over."

Henderson shook his head doubtfully.

"I don't know about that. It's only over inasmuch as I've come to a decision in my own mind as to how to act in the matter. Whether that decision is a wise one or not is another matter."

I was now as anxious to change the conversation as I had a moment before been to continue it. I felt that my friend had a secret that he wished to preserve.

"By the way, old man," I said brightly, "I saw Conway last Thursday, and he was asking after you. He's got an appointment in South Africa. He sails next week."

"Indeed!" said Henderson rather absently. "I hope he'll do well. But to return to our subject. I should like to put you in possession of the facts that have recently been made known to me. I will not even ask you to respect my confidence; the necessity for doing so will be apparent."

I raised a sort of objection—feeble, I'm afraid, for I was more than ever interested in the matter, after what he had said.

"If you'd rather keep the affair to yourself, Henderson," I said, "don't let my idle curiosity influence you, or tempt you to divulge any secrets."

Henderson smiled.

"I have absolute confidence in your discretion, Barnton. Besides, I should rather like your opinion on the course I've decided to adopt. But to continue: As I said, up to last week I took no special interest in this man. I knew that he had been well-to-do in the world, and that he was married—his wife has been here twice—but as to the cause of his madness I could learn nothing. I don't believe any sufficient cause has ever been assigned. Only in his ravings he sometimes mentions the name of a friend—a Frank Westlake—who had been hanged for murder several years ago. Some thought that the shock of his friend's death had been the initial cause of his mental breakdown. Such is the wife's opinion. As for myself, I could never bring myself to believe that such an event—terrible as it must have been—could have had

such a tragic effect on his mind. The matter, however, passed from my mind a week after the man's admission, and never recurred to me until last week, when the patient, who had been unusually quiet and tractable for several days, slipped a roll of paper into my hand during one of my daily visits. That paper contained a most extraordinary confession—so extraordinary, indeed, that, but for one circumstance to which I shall presently allude, I should be tempted to regard it as a purely imaginary tale, the product of a mind deranged.

"I must now," continued Henderson, "take your memory back five or six years. You may or may not remember the case of Mark Goulding, the city merchant, who was murdered in December, 1889?"

I shook my head doubtfully.

"The facts as reported are these: About ten minutes past eight on the 12th of December in that year, Goulding was found murdered in his private office in Wood Street, Cheapside. Frank Westlake was arrested, and charged with the crime. He was nephew to the murdered man, and had originally been in his employ, but there had long been a coldness between them—partly on account of Westlake's engagement to a girl named Helen Oldfield. The latter was also a relation of Goulding's—a niece, I fancy—so the two were distantly related. I am giving you the particulars and names so readily," said Henderson, "because I've looked up the daily papers of that period, and made myself master of the case.

"Perhaps the most damning bit of evidence against Westlake was a letter, or rather couple of letters, which were produced and read in Court. One was from the merchant, dated two days before his death, asking Westlake, who was in rather poor circumstances, earning an uncertain livelihood as an unattached journalist, to call at Wood Street to hear a proposal Goulding wished to make. There's no doubt that the proposal in question had for its object the separation of Helen Oldfield and Frank Westlake, the lever used being a threat to disinherit Miss Old-



"SLIPPED A ROLL OF PAPER INTO MY HAND"

field—at that time her uncle's heiress—should the marriage take place.

"Westlake's answer, which was couched in pretty strong terms, was to the effect that he would call as requested, but nothing should make him consent to renounce the merchant's niece.

"The circumstantial evidence was pretty conclusive. He had been in the office near about the time of the crime. He had been heard to utter angry, if not menacing words to the deceased half-an-hour previously. A moment after the tragedy, a young man bearing a strong resemblance to the prisoner was seen to leave the building.

"Westlake was condemned, and subsequently executed."

"I remember now, Henderson," I interpolated. "Didn't the niece inherit about £60,000? I recollect at the time thinking that looked precious black

against the prisoner. Particulars of the case are all coming back to me now. I followed it carefully at the time. Let me see—wasn't the solicitor who defended him a personal friend?"

Henderson nodded gravely.

"That solicitor is the man you have just seen, Barnton," he said, with a half shudder. "*The confession he has made exonerates Westlake from the crime of murder.*"

"Then he knows the real criminal?" I said. "He is the real criminal, eh? I begin to see —"

"I'm afraid you don't, Barnton," interrupted Henderson, quietly. "If ever a man were a murderer, the man who was known to the world as Paul Kaspar is one, but he was as guiltless of the death of Mark Goulding as either you or I. The man he killed was Frank Westlake."

I suppose I looked bewildered; I

certainly felt so. Henderson continued:

"Mark Goulding was last seen alive and well on the staircase leading to his private office, at ten minutes to eight on the night of his murder. Such was the evidence of a clerk in his employ. At a quarter to eight *precisely* on that same night, Westlake knocked at the door of the house in which Kaspar had rooms in a street off the Strand, and was admitted. There he remained until eleven o'clock in the solicitor's company."

"Why that's a perfect alibi," I exclaimed in amazement. "I don't remember it being set up by the defence."

Henderson shook his head.

"No, it was not set up. When Westlake was arrested, he at once sent for Paul Kaspar to undertake his defence. The moment Kaspar heard the clerk's evidence, as to seeing his employer alive at ten minutes to eight, he knew the line the defence must take. He told Westlake he'd be free in twenty-four hours. The alibi was unanswerable. The girl who had opened the door to him at Kaspar's had also been twice summoned to the room upstairs in which the two men were sitting. She could pick the prisoner out of a thousand.

"Practically he was as good as free, Kaspar told him so. But strange as it may appear Westlake didn't want this hasty acquittal. He wished the case to go to trial. He wished to be condemned, he wished to pass the three awful weeks in the condemned cell at Newgate; and—he wished to come out and give his sombre experiences to the world.

"None but a journalist—and a desperate one at that—would have projected such a wild scheme. He put the matter to Kaspar, and Kaspar consented to keep back the evidence of the alibi and let the trial proceed. But in spite of all he might still be acquitted. So much the worse. Westlake wished to hear the judge pronounce the most dreadful of all sentences. It would make interesting 'copy' a month or two later. It meant notoriety—journalistic success and—Helen Oldfield.

"The arrangement between them was that if Westlake was condemned Kaspar should wait until the last twenty-four hours—until the prisoner stood within the very shadow of the gallows—and then dramatically produce the evidence, and demand from the Home Secretary a respite, and following that a free pardon.

"To me it seems a scheme worthy of two madmen. That any solicitor should lend himself to such trickery seems incredible, but on one supposition—that of contemplated treachery to his friend. The confession, however, states that the arrangement was entered into in good faith on the writer's part—treachery being an afterthought."

"And the object?" I asked in a half whisper.

Henderson shivered slightly.

"*Love and jealousy.* Two years after Westlake's execution, Kaspar married Miss Oldfield. The horrible part of it is that she married him principally because he was to her, the embodiment of chivalrous friendship. At the time he made, or pretended to make, great efforts for a reprieve which he knew quite well would not be granted. To Helen Oldfield he was *Frank's* friend and she married him as such. Kaspar was well aware of the fact at the time; his confession shows that. She has been here to see him twice. She still clings to the belief that his madness is the outcome of the shock inflicted by the fate of his friend. It must of necessity endear him still more to her," Henderson concluded with a half suppressed sigh.

"You spoke of a circumstance which, in your opinion, seemed to corroborate this man's story?" I said interrogatively.

"I did," said Henderson, "it concluded the press account of the execution, and was as follows: (I quote verbatim from the *Daily Messenger*. The words have haunted me for a week past; to both of us they must bear an awful significance.)

"It appears that the unhappy man, contrary to the expectation of the prison officials, struggled fiercely while Berry was pinioning him. To the last he firmly protested his innocence and

declared he had purposely kept back conclusive evidence of the latter. He begged to be permitted to communicate with the Home Secretary, and the name of his solicitor—Mr. Kaspar—the gentleman who has made such gallant, though unavailing efforts to secure a reprieve for his client—was constantly on his lips. It is even said that he charged him with treachery, maintaining that the solicitor held irrefutable proofs of his innocence. Of course there can be little doubt that the condemned man was almost if not quite insane as the end approached.

"There Barnton, that is corroboration sufficient, I fear. Poor Westlake! What a terrible doom; but you've not died unavenged. A condemned cell for you—a padded cell for your murderer.

"And now you'll be interested to hear what I've decided to do with the confession?"

I inclined my head.

"I'm going to lock it away where no one can come across it."

"And you think that is right?" I ventured to say. "What about the relations of the unfortunate Westlake? This would clear his memory from the stain of murder and——"

"And kill Mrs. Kaspar," concluded Henderson quietly. "You think that would be advisable?"

I considered a minute, then I put a question:

"Are there any near relatives of Westlake living, do you know?"

"No, so far as I can learn there is none nearer than a distant cousin. The murdered man was his nearest relation. The papers stated that at the time."

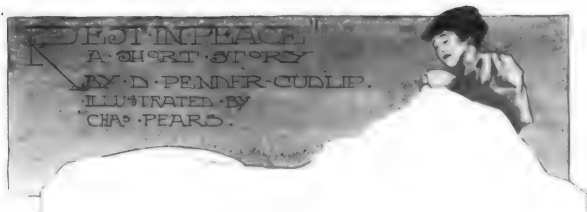
"Then, Henderson, I think you've decided wisely. Put the wretched thing away or burn it. No good can come of publishing the contents."

"Not at present," agreed Henderson, "but I have a conviction that Mrs. Kaspar is not long for this world. She visited the asylum three months ago and——" Henderson paused thoughtfully.

"Of course her death would entirely change the aspect of affairs," I said.

"Yes, my duty would then be plain. Until then I am prepared to undertake the responsibility of withholding the confession. And now, Barnton, let us go and prepare for the festivities. I hear the sound of carriage wheels; some of the guests are arriving.





CORPORAL BROWN was composing a letter. It was evidently a letter of some importance, judging from the rather strained and anxious expression on the face of the writer. His tunic was unbuttoned, and his belt slung on the bench at his side. This, as he expressed it, was to give his ideas a chance of coming out. Many sheets were torn up and cast aside, and much ink wasted, especially about the fingers, before he had achieved anything that he considered would pass muster.

Finally he put the pen down with a sigh of satisfaction, and a sense of duty done, and, relighting his pipe, he took the precious document in his hands and read it aloud, having first glanced round to see that there was no one to hear. It ran as follows:—

“My dear Betty,

“Hoping this will find you as well as it leaves me at present. Only a few more days, my dear Betty, and you and me will be together; and I will promise to make you a good husband. If loving a girl goes for anything, then I am the man for you; for I do love you, my girl—you know that, don't you? You and me, Betty, is going to be very happy together. Not like some of the poor chaps, who go and get married 'off the strength,' and the poor women have to bear the brunt of it. But we shall have cosy married quarters, and I will give

you every penny of my pay, and you can just let me have enough for my ‘baccy’ and a drink now and then at the canteen. But don't you worry, my girl; I shan't want to go often to the canteen. When a chap has got a comfortable home of his own, and a dear little woman for a companion, he'd be a fool to leave them for anything else. I shall be going on furlough the day after to-morrow, and I've written to the parson, arranging all about our wedding for Sunday, and as I've saved a bit of money, we'll be like the swells, and go for a couple of days' honeymoon, as I needn't rejoin till Tuesday. Somehow, I can't say all I want to; so I must wait till I see you on Saturday. So I'll end this by saying I love you, Betty, and that just seems to cover all I want to say.

“Your loving
“JACK.”

Having read it carefully through twice, Corporal Brown folded the letter, put it into an envelope, and with great care and deliberation addressed it to—

“Miss Betty Herbert,
“The Mill House,
“Molesey.”

“Bless her heart!” he exclaimed aloud, as he stuck the stamp on with Her Most Gracious Majesty's head the wrong way up. “And there goes a kiss along with it!”

He was turning to go out of the



"I LOVE YOU, BETTY, AND THAT JUST SEEMS TO COVER ALL I WANT TO SAY. —YOUR LOVING JACK"

barrack-room, when he met one of the men coming in.

"Hullo, mate!" the man exclaimed. "Been writing to your sweetheart, eh?"

"Yes, that I have; and she'll be my wife before this day week comes round again. I'm going on leave simply for the purpose of getting married." And Corporal Brown straightened himself up, and looked defiance at the other man, as much as to say, "You laugh who dare!"

"Well, good luck go with you," the man answered, "although you are another young man taken in and done for!" With which parting shot he sauntered into the room, and Corporal Brown strode out to post his letter.

Leaving the fort, he struck out for the cliff pathway; for, in his present mood, he preferred the solitude of the cliffs, and the calm glory of the autumn sunset, to the noise and bustle of the barrack-room. It was a lovely evening, such as one only sees in the West of England. Sea and sky seemed merged into one vast expanse of warm blue. Away on the extreme east lay the town of Plymouth, looking like some dream

of fairyland, all her windows lit up with the reflected glow of the setting sun. Gradually the colours became less intense, until the whole scene became like a beautiful opal, the delicate shades of pink, blue, mauve, and green veiled like a clouded opal in the mist that rose from the sea, as the sun sank lower and lower in the horizon.

The man sat on until the last ray of pink light faded from the top of the eastern cliffs, and the evening star shone out clear and brilliant in the pale sky. Slowly the mists rose and swept over the face of the waters, now obscuring the hull of a passing smack, while the top of the sails rose out of the thick white vapour like some phantom ship, sometimes sweeping on swiftly, and enveloping all as it came in its white shroud. Thicker and thicker rose the mist, until at last all was wrapped in its beautiful but dangerous embrace.

"Blest if it don't look like a woman's marriage veil," the man exclaimed aloud, his thoughts having previously run in that direction, and as he uttered his exclamation he rose to go. Simulta-

neously the sound as of a passing bell boomed out on the fog-laden air. It was the Breakwater Lighthouse bell, that was always tolled in a fog, to warn off passing vessels from the treacherous coast. Slowly and solemnly the bell tolled out, muffled by the thickness of the fog, sounding the note of warning and of death!

"Beastly thing!" the man muttered irritably, "making a chap think of funerals on the eve of his wedding. Bah!" he exclaimed, "I must be getting soft. Corporal Brown, you're a fool; pull yourself together, and leave such hysterical nonsense to the women." And he turned from the sea and strode away in the direction of the fort.

Suddenly his steps were arrested by the sound of an agonised cry for help coming from the rocks below the cliff where he stood, followed by the barking of a dog. "Help! Help!" rang out the voice in a succession of terrified shrieks, a child's voice without a doubt. Down the path he flew in an instant, there was not a soul within call, and not a moment to lose. "One of the kids was in the quicksands, and he must get him out of it."

"All right, I'm coming," he yelled out reassuringly as he ran, and his voice sounded like music to the terrified scrap of humanity, who was being slowly but surely sucked into the treacherous sand by the swiftly running current. With help so near at hand the poor little boy broke down and sobbed in his terror, and well he did so, for the fog was now so dense his rescuer could only be guided by sound. "All right, sonnie, I'm coming; hang on a bit longer, and I'll get you out of it." But he had reckoned without his host, the child was not within easy reach by any means, and if he would save him he would have to swim for it; and he knew what it meant—almost certain death. The current at this point was so strong that the champion swimmer in the corps had once before nearly been drowned there, since when the spot had been marked "Dangerous," and forbidden to the men by a paternal War Office. At low tide the child must have wandered on to the rocks, then not noticing the rising tide, was cut off, and in trying

to jump from one rock to the other, had fallen in and been caught in the swift under-current.

In a moment Corporal Brown's tunic was off and he had dived from the rock; immediately he was spun round, and before he had time to strike out for himself, had been carried several yards away. With a violent effort, he managed a few strokes, but could make no headway against the seething waters. Seeing that his rescuer was in as bad a position now as himself, took the last remaining strength from the frightened child, and he let go from the rock to which he had been clinging. In an instant his frail little body was sucked under. With superhuman strength, born of a desperate resolve, Corporal Brown struck out for the spot; but too late, the quicksands had claimed their victim. Realising with a cold terror the fruitlessness of his effort, he relaxed for a moment, and in that moment was caught in the back-wash, and swept down, down into the seething whirlpool. And the quicksands claimed their second victim that day.

The only living witness of this tragedy was a shivering and half-drowned fox-terrier, who stood on the rock above, with ears pointed and nostrils sniffing over the spot where his little master had disappeared.

Night came on; still the faithful little creature sat on guarding the tunic and belt, and watching, always watching the spot, waiting with that wonderful patience so common to animals for the friends who would never return.

The lighthouse bell still boomed out over the silence, as the fog became denser and denser, and spread its white pall over the land; and a letter went on its way to a little girl in Molesey, who would be happy in reading it, not knowing anything of the grim joke Fate had played with her life.

A few hours later, lanterns flickered on the cliffs like will-o'-the-wisps; voices called, but there was none to answer; only the whining of a dog to guide the search party, and a corporal's tunic and belt the only clue to the missing man and child.

It was soon apparent what had happened. Sergeant Hewit's little boy

had somehow fallen into the quicksands; and the corporal in trying to save him had lost his own life.

All night his comrades kept their sad vigil, in the hope of recovering the bodies; but it was not until four days later, on the Sunday morning—his wedding day—that the body of Corporal Brown was washed ashore.

Reverently they bore the body back to the fort, there to await the last sad rites of burial.

* * *

Meanwhile, Betty heard nothing. The adjutant having previously gone on leave, was not there to mention the fact that Corporal Brown had been granted leave of absence to get married, and few, if any, of his messmates knew anything about it, so that every one's business was nobody's, and Betty was forgotten.

It was not until the Monday morning that a letter addressed to Corporal Brown was handed to the Colonel. He opened it and read:—

"You have almost broken my heart, Jack. Why didn't you come yesterday? Up to the last moment I never doubted you, although the others exchanged looks that cut me to the heart with shame, for I knew they were pitying me, believing you to have played me false, and deserted me. But don't think I ever thought so for a moment. I trust you, Jack, now and always. Something must have happened to you, and you feared to let me know, or you would never have left me so cruelly on our very wedding day. Let me have a line at once to explain the reason of your not coming, then I can hold up my head again.

"Always your loving

"BETTY."

"Did you know that Brown was going to be married?" asked the Colonel of the orderly who handed him the letter.

"No, sir," he answered; "he kept himself to himself, and none of us knew much about him."

When the man left, the Colonel turned to the officer who was doing adjutant's duty during the absence of the latter and said:

"I feel rather ashamed of myself about this business; I ought to have remembered the fellow was going to be married, but somehow the fact escaped me. I signed all his papers only last week. Some one must write at once to the poor girl and break it to her; I'll do it myself"—whereupon he wrote the following letter:—

"Dear Miss Herbert,

"I regret to have to inform you that Corporal Brown has met with a very serious accident, and we think it only right to let you know that very small hope is held out for his recovery. It is only to-day that the fact of his engagement to you was brought to my notice, otherwise you should have been informed earlier. I deeply grieve having to be the sender of such bad news. I understand that Corporal Brown has only one relative living, a sailor in the Royal Navy; if you can enlighten us as to his whereabouts I should be very grateful.

"In all sympathy,

"Yours faithfully,

"HENRY TREVENNON,

"Col.—Regt."

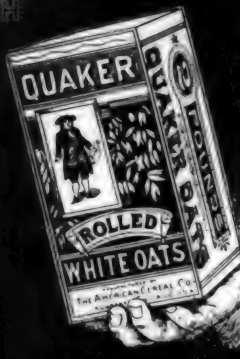
When she received it, her one thought was to go to him at once, yet all the time with the dread foreboding that she would be too late. Before that day was many hours older, however, she was on her way to Plymouth.

* * *

Who is there, who, having once followed a dear one to the grave, is not moved almost beyond endurance at the sorrowful anguish-laden strains of the Dead March in "Saul"?

It certainly proved more than she could bear to Betty, as, going up the coach road to the fort, stumbling blindly through a dense fog, she heard the grand yet awful strains of the funeral march. She could see nothing. Everywhere the fog lay thick and white. All sound seemed hushed by it. Gradually out of that vast white silence came the sound of muffled tramping of feet, and over all the solemn throb of the music, as though some mighty heart were breaking. She stood aside as the sound came nearer and nearer, still seeing

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nothing. Suddenly the phantom shapes of soldiers loomed vaguely out of the mist, and as suddenly disappeared again into its white shroud.

On they came, four abreast, with arms reversed, marching slowly to those beautiful but heartrending strains,

the coffin came abreast of her, Betty realised in a flash, with that unerring instinct God has given to women, that it contained all that was mortal of the man she loved.

There was a sudden and heartbroken cry, a woman threw herself at the side



"SUDDENLY THE PHANTOM SHAPES OF SOLDIERS LOOMED VAGUELY OUT OF THE MIST"

Finally, as a climax to the mournful procession came the gun-carriage, bearing a man's coffin covered with the Union Jack—the flag the soldier fights under being the most fitting and beautiful pall when he is taken to his long rest. As

of the coffin, and clutched frantically at the pall, covering it with kisses.

"Jack! Jack!" she moaned; then, starting up, she burst into a peal of derisive laughter, and struck the coffin viciously with her fists. The shock had

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breathe. I had severe pains after eating, and my stomach was
constantly filled with wind. I always had a very bad taste in my
mouth, when I would awake in the morning, and had but very little
appetite for my meals. This was my condition for years. Twelve
months ago, in February, 1894, a friend of mine recommended me to
try Phosferine, and I bought a bottle at Day's Drug Store at
Camberwell Gate, where I was then living. I had taken about a
bottle before I noticed a change for the better, then my symptoms
gradually left me, until I became, as you see me now, thoroughly
well, with a good appetite, and never the slightest sign of any of my
old maladies. If I ever feel out of sorts I immediately fly to my
bottle of Phosferine, and it always sets me right. I have recom-
mended it to many of my friends, and would not be without it on
any account. I shall do all in my power to induce anyone suffering
as I have done to give Phosferine a trial, as I am sure they will bless
the day they did.

"(Signed) **THOMAS BYTHEWAY.**

"37, The Green, Stratford, 11th February, 1899."

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left me, although I have tried several well-advertised remedies, but
which proved to be of no use in my case; I nearly gave up all hope
of ever getting anything that would ease or stop the pain, but seeing
your advertisement, I determined to try a bottle, which I did, with
the following results: The first dose eased the pain; the second
nearly took it right away, or the pain only returned now and then;
the third dose, which I took an hour afterwards, completely cured
me, and I have not had a return of it since.

"Yours truly, **HENRY L. COMPTON.**

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proved too much for her overwrought nerves, and the girl's brain had given way under it.

"Take that, and *that*, and *that*!" she cried out, hitting the coffin again and again with her fists till the knuckles bled.

For an instant all was consternation, until a young officer who was directly behind the gun-carriage came to her and tried gently to draw her away from her unconscious sacrilege of the dead.

"Poor girl! poor girl!" he murmured brokenly, and tears were in his eyes, it was so pitiful yet so horrible.

"Leave me alone!" she almost screamed. "They all told me he was deceiving me, and now I know it. He thinks he can escape me by getting into a coffin; he never loved me at all; he lied to me all the time, and I *hate* him for it," and she was going to strike the coffin again, when the officer gently but firmly drew her away, and the procession slowly moved away into the mist out of their sight.

He held her firmly, as she tried to wrest herself from him. Away in the distance they could still hear the funeral march, coming softly through the silent fog. The muffled drums boomed out like the sound of the last trump, and at each beat the girl quivered as though she were struck. Then the *motif* of the music changed, the happier, brighter

key was struck, the latter half of the Dead March that seems to speak of the Resurrection and the Life, and the reunion of severed hearts. The change in the music seemed to touch some chord in her heart and poor shattered brain, the tension relaxed, and she suffered herself to be led back to the fort by the officer, who, finding the Colonel's wife, handed her over to a woman's care.

* * * *

Meanwhile they laid Corporal Brown to his long rest. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the Resurrection." And they fired three volleys over the open grave, the last mark of honour shown to a soldier.

Then they marched back to barracks, the band playing the "Washington Post," through bright sunshine—for the fog had lifted.

* * * *

From Betty's brain the fog will never lift, but, for her sake, her friends are glad of it. She is quite happy, always sewing at her wedding dress, she thinks "to-morrow" is her wedding day, but with her there comes no "to-morrow." Not until she "falls asleep" will she wear her bridal dress. Then they will lay her in it, and say, "Rest in peace."



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WHAT TO READ

WHEN the day's work is over, and we are at liberty to amuse ourselves, many of us devote our time and attention to reading light literature. Absorbed in the story we forget all about our worries and anxieties, and are able next day to return to the struggle with renewed strength and energy.

An immense amount of fiction is published yearly; the ordinary mind is lost in its mazes, and unless it has something to guide it, has trouble in knowing the good from the bad, and in kindness to those we give our opinion. Among the numerous novels that have recently come before us, quite one of the best is "The Priest's Marriage," by Norah Vynne. It is brightly and cleverly written, and sustains one's interest to the end, while throwing side lights on some phases of emotions that are by no means improbable. The story hinges on a Roman Catholic priest who forsakes his religion, and marries the heroine, ultimately forsaking her and returning to his Church.

CLEANLINESS

EVERYTHING looked bright and clean, and there was not a speck of dirt or dust to be seen anywhere. All good housewives would like this to be said of their homes where they spend no end of time and trouble in endeavouring to

keep things clean. Sometimes they are not very successful; the plate and metal work about the house is not as bright as it might be. "It was cleaned only the other day," they will sorrowfully say, "and has no business to look like as it does in the short time that has elapsed." But let's give them a wrinkle worth its weight in gold. Such a saving it will be in time and trouble, and if duly followed will for ever do away with dirty plate and metal work. Buy a reliable metal polish; you will find The Globe the best. When you have once used it you will never try another. It not only does its work thoroughly, but it does it quickly, and a great point in its favour is that it will not injure the hands. Globe Metal Polish is sold everywhere.

ARE YOU TIRED?

AT some period or other in our lives, most of us suffer from a tired feeling which we are unable to account for; we cannot say that we are ill, or that anything is the matter with us, but are simply not up to the mark.

The truth of the matter is that we have probably been overworking ourselves, and allowed our system to run down.

That tired feeling is Nature's danger signal, and if you don't wish to become worse, you had better pay attention to it. When you feel that way, something ought to be done at once; you must not take time to think about it, or before

you know where you are, quite as likely as not, you will find yourself seriously ill. If taken in time there is very little danger. The system simply wants strengthening, and nothing will more quickly bring back the appetite and restore the patient to health and vigour than a good tonic. This will be found in Hall's Wine, strongly recommended by all doctors as a means of restoring to health and vigour those who are a little below par. Hall's Wine is sold by all chemists, grocers, and wine merchants.

TRAVEL

NOT many years ago it was the exception, rather than the rule, to find people who had visited countries other than the one they lived in. However, times have changed a good deal since then, and at the present moment it would be difficult to discover any one with means who has not travelled, or expects to do so some time or other. Travellers in these modern times have few difficulties to contend with, and when starting on a journey, even if it be round the world, they do so with a light heart, as on the sea no greater dangers will be encountered than are to be met with while travelling by rail, or in crossing the streets of any big city. The steamers that convey them to their destination can easily be called floating palaces, replete with every comfort and convenience that could be called for, and if it were not for the movement of the vessel, they could easily believe themselves at home in a good hotel.

At this season of the year, to escape the cold weather, numbers of people regularly go to the Riviera, returning to England in the Spring, when the weather has become settled. It is,

comparatively speaking, a simple matter to get there, the journey lasting a little over a day, only an hour of which need be spent on the sea, crossing the Channel.

When there you will find a very different climate to that you have left behind you; one where the sun is always shining, and where even the invalids can daily enjoy themselves in the open air.

When you have once made up your mind to travel, there is no need to trouble about the details; these can all be arranged for you by a Travel Agency such as that of Henry Gaze & Sons, Ltd., who will supply you with a ticket to any place, over any route, at the same price you would have to pay should you buy it direct. And not only do they do this, but in addition they will supply you free of charge with all particulars as to the best stopping-places, hotels, and any other information you may wish for.

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DELIGHTFUL MELODIES

MUSIC of some kind or other has always a charm for the human ear; even the savage delights in the to us discordant noises produced by his rude instruments, while we listen entranced to the melodious strains produced by a good orchestra, and when that is the accompaniment of a good song our delight knows no bounds; we lean back in our seats with our eyes closed, for the moment forgetting where we are, and almost believing that we have been removed to another and happier sphere.

Not all songs or music, however, will

produce these happy feelings; to do so they must be of the best, including the performers. Really good songs are so few and far between that when we come across them, if only for that reason they deserve a more than passing mention.

What we want is a song of a simple catching nature, that appeals to our affections, and comes as it were from the heart. A song of this nature, set to music that can be played by every one, and whose strains are particularly entrancing, is bound to become popular, once heard it is never forgotten and the listener will never be satisfied until he has it in his possession to be learnt by heart.

By this time our readers will pretty well understand our ideas about good songs and music, and if they get two that have recently come under our notice they may rely upon not being disappointed; they are published by Mr. Thomas Holloway, of 78, New Oxford Street, and the first is "The Dream of Life" (words by Mr. E. Rourke, music by C. Preston Wynne); the second is "My Love for Ever and Aye" (words and music by Karl Monkton). These songs are bound to become popular and will be appreciated by everybody who hears them. These songs are published at 2s. each, but any reader by mentioning this journal can obtain either song direct from the publisher, Thomas Holloway, 78, New Oxford Street, London, W., for 2½d. in stamps. The two songs will be sent for five penny stamps.

PURE SUGAR

WE all have a natural taste for sweet things, and in our youth take full advantage of our liking; and it is only

when that period has passed, and our taste becomes vitiated, that the craving in any way becomes modulated.

That pure sugar in any form is harmful is a popular delusion, and not borne out by facts. Any one who has ever been in the West Indian Islands, among the negroes, working on the sugar plantations, must have noticed what splendid teeth they had—so sound and white; and yet these people daily use immense quantities of sugar, and we are told that it is bad for the teeth.

The truth of the matter is that really pure sugar, made from cane, not beet, if taken in moderate quantities, has a distinctly beneficial effect on the human system, nourishing it, and enabling the person taking it (as has been proved by scientific tests) to perform harder work than he was able to do before taking it.

These results were obtained, however, by using the pure article; and we cannot be too careful about always getting that, considering the enormous quantity yearly used by most of us for sweetening purposes—jams, preserved fruit, and other things of a like nature.

Every one should insist upon having pure cane sugar given them; and the only way you can be certain about getting the pure article is to buy it from some reliable maker.

If you do this you can use sugar in any form or quantity to your heart's content, and rely upon receiving no injury from doing so. In fact, as has been stated previously, pure sugar exercises a beneficent effect on the human system.

When buying sugar, if you wish to make sure of getting the pure article, always ask for Glebe Cane Sugar and refuse to take any other brand; it is manufactured by the Glebe Sugar Refining Co. of Greenock, and sold by most grocers, and should they not keep it you can get it from the stores.